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*Saml. Miller.*

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HISTORY  
OF THE  
COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY,  
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<b>COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY, AT PRINCETON.</b>										
<b>1844.</b>										
1 Vice Pres. House. 2 Philos. and Chem. Hall. 3 Steward's House. 4 East College. 5 West College. 6 Professor's House. 7 Library. 8 President's House.										



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HISTORY

*Sam. J. Miller.*

OF THE

COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY,

FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT, A. D., 1746, TO 1783.

[PREPARED ORIGINALLY FOR THE PRINCETON WHIG, FEB, 1844.]

BY A GRADUATE.

*William Allen Brown, D.D., Oct 22 1848*

PRINCETON, N. J.:

PUBLISHED BY J. T. ROBINSON.

1844.

Smith, J. M.

## HISTORY OF THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY.

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THE date from which the College of New Jersey commences its existence as a *legal Corporation*, is the *fourteenth day of September, seventeen hundred and forty-eight*. As a *Literary Institution*, the Seminary from which this College took its rise, went into operation some years before—probably soon after the division of the Synod of Philadelphia—which then represented the whole Presbyterian Church in the British Provinces—into the Synods of Philadelphia and New York, which took place in 1741. It is *certain* that such a school was established as early as the 22d of October, 1746, through the exertions of gentlemen who adhered to the Synod of New York, which at that time comprised among others, the Colony of New Jersey, (and which body, it is in point to notice in this connexion, had been violently reproached, with some show of reason arising from the urgency of the case, by the partisans of the other connection, with promoting candidates to the office of the ministry, who were deficient in literary qualifications.) For it appears from the notes of President Green, out of which the present account of the College is mainly compiled, that “a charter to incorporate sundry persons to found a College, passed the great seal of this Province of New Jersey, tested by John Hamilton, Esq., President of his Majesty’s Council and Commander-in-Chief of the Province of New Jersey, the 22d October, 1746”—*to whom*, it was granted, is not a matter of record; but there is no doubt that the patrons of the *School* mentioned were the petitioners for this charter, and that from some inadequate nature of its privileges, they studiously refrained from acting under it. It is also certain that the persons who applied for *this* charter were the same ones that two years afterwards obtained the present charter of the College.

But as they never availed themselves of the corporate powers of the previous franchise it cannot be properly said that they at that time had acquired the corporate style of it. It is true that no mention is made of the *surrender* of this charter but it is equally true that there is no mention made of its *acceptance*, but from the absence of anything positive, the contrary is to be inferred. And moreover, the instrument under which that body receives its present powers, is not a modification, but is an *original* document in all respects. Still, the question of the legal date of the College, is, perhaps after all, one not so much of technical construction as of historical uncertainty. And he who knows the above facts has as much ground for an opinion as it is possible at this time to obtain. The only important end to be attained by relating the date of the College to the charter of 1746, is that the *formal* presidency of Mr. Dickinson may be included in the collegiate history, though his virtual authority and connexion with the present Institution, may be considered as incorporated with the very existence of it. And in connection with the difficulty of settling this precise question, it may be remarked, that no incidental information, as from the public prints of the time—local pamphlets, &c., is to be found concerning, or emanating from this College, after the most laborious research. So early even from its inception did it assume that noiseless confidence in the intrinsic truthfulness and fidelity of its fundamental doctrines, that it rejected from the very outset any public appeal to any motive that was not as real as itself. And though its approach to this moment, has been that of a perilous, and often of a truly pathetic discipline of external trial and destitution, yet in all its appeals it has never implored—in all its sufferings it has never complained—and

the paltriness of a *self-glorification*, he must search long after, who undertakes to find. At least such is the fatigued testimony of the compiler, who has no more immediate interest in what he affirms, than that of a proud devotion, in common with his fellow-alumni. The cotemporaneous history of *this* College is only in the technical volumes of its own records, and the breasts of its graduates.—And those of them who have not had occasion to notice the generality of this fact, ought to be informed of it. Our Alma Mater is forever guiltless of any discoverable instance of self-praise—and she is equally guiltless of any vehemence of self-commiseration. Whatever cries the severity of her reverses may have extorted, have been without emphasis, in words of exact wisdom, that could have come only from a calm self-possession inspired by the steady consciousness of the intrinsic worthiness and dignity of her own doctrine, and by which she has always been majestic even in her lamentations.

From what has been already said—from the most abundant direct evidence from sources to be mentioned, and from the nature of the existing circumstances, it is manifest that, under those circumstances, the College of New Jersey traces its immediate origin to the *influence of religion*. And it was only an influence so vital and so urgent, that could by any ordinary possibility at that juncture, have educed the result. Doubtless a merely secular and prudential necessity for a corporate literary institution was strongly perceived at that time and had been felt for years previous.

Throughout the whole extent of the British Provinces lying between Connecticut and Virginia, there was no institution having authority to confer degrees in the arts. From the date of the charter of the present College of New Jersey back to that of Yale, in Connecticut, was a period of forty-seven years. The New England Provinces had established their Harvard, in Massachusetts, in 1638; the southern had founded their William and Mary in Virginia in 1691. And certainly in the middle portions of the country—though from their later date of settlement, and from their conflicts and ill-adjusted arbitrations with foreign pre-occupants of their territory, their colonial polity was later in coming to the equilibrium and energy of a well confirmed government; yet no one doubts that their constitutions and

resources had by this time worked out for them such a degree of refinement and importance, that the necessity for an incorporated institution of learning had become imperative upon them as well as their neighbors, both for the utility and the accomplishment of the education which it should impart. But no one who has only cursorily examined the political aspect of the middle provinces during those forty-seven years, will for a moment suppose, that under the circumstances, any principle less urgent than that of the force of vital religion could have met that necessity and have obviated it in any other way than that of abandoning it. It cannot be too strongly insisted upon that the College of New Jersey is not only religious in its principles but was the necessary and only possible *product of religion*. That, as no merely external necessity could have been sufficient to originate it under the political circumstances existing at its commencement, neither could the utmost pertinacity of a purely sectarian impulse have any more accomplished and sustained the end. And that while it is thus removed from a sole dependence upon any principle of temporal association, it is equally, if not much farther removed from any alliance or connexion with the unnatural and partial force of any superstitious partisan preference. It will be manifest to any one who looks for a moment at the tumultuous state of society in these provinces during the administration of Governor Morris, the commotions of which had not subsided even long after the more rational and dignified rule of Governor Belcher, and which before they came fully to rest, were met and still more violently agitated by the influx of yet fiercer sources of disagreement; in addition to all their difficulties with border aggressors; the incessant demands of the mother country for supplies to promote her own wars; the obstinate contest that had already commenced between the prerogative and democratic element; one part of the government in a constant attitude of suspicion and onset against the other; each only studying how it might over-manceuvre and thwart its *rival*; the exorbitancy and superciliousness of the aristocratic branch, and the retaliating incompatibility and sullenness of the commons. In the midst of a complication of things so hopeless and so far removed from the temper of any kind of literary complacency, it is manifest that not only was it the radiating efficacy of



a *religious* principle operating upon the necessity created by its own wants, as well as that of the external public, that *could* alone have overcome those difficulties; but that if the College of New Jersey had not established itself during Belcher's administration—the only time of comparative quiet that the colony enjoyed from its settlement to the war of the revolution—then after that crisis, no possible union of *any kind* could have been adequate to the confirmation of such an undertaking till after the peace of 1783. This is a vital point in the history of the College, and it has been thought proper to insist upon it; and those who may not have turned their attention to its history may easily see that of the two opposite reproaches which have been cast upon the Institution, that it originated and advanced under a political subserviency, or else that it grew out of an ecclesiastical sectarianism—the one is as impossible as the other is absurd.

It has been said, that there was nothing existing under the turbulent political character of the times, at all coincident with the necessity that had grown up for a literary institution, which was not either too partial or too busy to produce it, except it be found in the consistent and predominating force of a truly religious sentiment. And in the same thing consists the design of this College—namely, “an union of religion and learning.” It is not now, for the purpose of resisting reproach or the possibility of it, that this point has been noticed. For, although it is not always easy to make all persons distinguish the difference between a technical inception and a vital origin; or the after distinction, between the obvious supervision of a mere executive unity, and the equitable administration of a general design—yet it is not supposable that the Institution is in any great danger on this point. It is to make apparent the precise nature of this College, and the grand aim and purpose of its founders, who in the best earnestness of humanity and godliness set themselves to the work which they accomplished. The piety and patience of these excellent wise men to be appreciated must be understood.

Those gentlemen of the Synod of New York who instituted the plan and method of this undertaking, selected the State of New Jersey as the centre of their operations, probably because it was the most central in territory—the most congenial at the time in its moral aspect—and chiefly because they found in

the elegant and public spirited Belcher, for whom they were waiting, a mind and a heart consonant with their own efforts—New Jersey too, was the place of residence of the most influential characters engaged in the work—and it happened also that the man of all of them who was in all respects the best adapted to superintend and conduct the education of youth, was likewise a resident of this State. — This was the *Rev. Jonathan Dickinson* of Elizabethtown. “We have seen that Mr. Dickinson was President of the College only under the first charter. Who were the trustees named in that charter, or appointed under it, when or where they met, or at what time and in what manner Mr. Dickinson was appointed President, cannot now be known and it is useless to conjecture.\* It is not improbable that he had long been accustomed to receive youth for instruction in classical literature. For this employment Mr. Dickinson was better qualified than most of his brethren; and there is little reason to doubt that he had been engaged in it for a considerable time. But however this might have been previously to the granting of the charter for a college, it is certain that he was so employed for the short period that intervened between the date of the charter and time of his death. It is also certain that his pupils had made very considerable progress in the course of their education; for about a year after his decease, it appears that six individuals received their Bachelor's degree. This was under the present charter, which in the mean time had been obtained by Gov. Belcher, but it is probable that the whole of these youths had been previously in the training of Mr. Dickinson, and that by his instructions they had advanced so far as to be within a year of graduation.

“How many pupils, in all, were under his care, at the time of his decease, can only be conjectured. From the number graduated the author thinks it probable that the whole number did not exceed twenty. Some of them, it is likely, boarded with the President, and the others in families near to his dwelling,

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\* Concerning this doubt of a “bona fide” acceptance of the first charter a piece of information was overlooked in the last communication, it is this:—“In a conversation on the subject with the late Dr. Boudinot, a few months before his death, he assured the writer (Pres. Green) that such a charter had been granted, and that Mr. Dickinson *had acted under it*, as President of the College.”

in Elizabethtown, as no public buildings had then been erected for their accommodation.—It is presumed that an usher or tutor was employed to assist the President, but the chief labor of instruction must have fallen upon himself. What must have been his activity and industry, when, to all his other occupations and engagements were added the duties of a practising physician? Yet those duties he so performed as to obtain a considerable medical reputation.” The building in which this school, or incipient college, was held is said to have been near to the first Presbyterian Church of Elizabethtown: and its foundation walls, yet remaining on that spot, are now pointed out as the embryo Nassau Hall. Mr. Dickinson was a native of Hatfield in Massachusetts. His descent was from a reputable family. His parents were Hezekiah and Abigail Dickinson. The tradition is that, his mother was a widow, married and removed to Springfield, with her children, and that their step-father furnished their education. Her son Moses was a clergyman of high distinction in his day, and was pastor of the Congregational church at Norwalk, in Connecticut. Jonathan, as it appears by the town records of Hatfield, was born 22d April, 1688. He was one of the brightest luminaries of the American church at the period in which he lived. He was graduated at Yale College in 1706, and within one or two years afterwards, he was settled minister of the first Presbyterian Church in Elizabethtown, New Jersey. Of this church he was, for near forty years, the joy and glory.\* The abilities and character of President Dickinson are so well known, that it is deemed unnecessary to make any further extracts. This venerable man, so intimately connected with the first existence of this Institution of learning, and who was one of the most strenuous and most laborious of all its early promoters, died at his own parish, where his body now lies, the 7th of October 1747—as appears from a part of the inscription on his monument

“Here

Lies the body of the Rev'd  
Mr. JONATHAN DICKINSON, Pastor  
of the first Presbyterian Church  
In Elizabethtown, who died, October,  
The 7th, 1747; ætatis suæ 60.”

“The pupils who had been under the

charge of Mr. Dickinson, at Elizabethtown, were, after his death, removed to *Newark* and placed under the care of Mr. Burr. He, therefore, was considered as the successor of Mr. Dickinson in the Presidency of the College, even under the first charter. Whether there was any formal appointment to that effect, is unknown. But it appears that he had the superintendence and instruction of the youth who had been collected as the beginning of a College, for about a year, before the charter was obtained under which they received graduation. It will be seen, among other things, by extracts from the minutes of the trustees, which will be given after noticing the history of Belcher's charter, that a class was in readiness to receive their Bachelor's degree, within a month after the time that charter took effect; and that under that charter the degrees were conferred by Mr. Burr, on the very day on which he was elected President. Everything therefore, must have been previously prepared and arranged with a view to this event.” Now to accommodate this difficult business of the *first* charter, it manifestly appears from an examination of the history, and the *silence* of it, to be simply this:—That such a document was applied for, and obtained, almost immediately after the ambitious and troubled administration of Gov. Morris, is beyond all question, for in Lib. C. of Commissions, Charters, &c., fol. 137—the same book in which at page 196, the charter under Gov. Belcher is recorded,—of ancient records in the office of Secretary of this State, is found the authentic *memorandum*, before spoken of, and which cannot from history be referred to any other persons than those in the premises. And it is equally certain that there was something in the nature or circumstances of this charter which rendered it so dishonorable in their sight that they maintained themselves in an attitude of cautious reserve towards it—that in the meantime they held themselves in abeyance, in strong and silent faith, proceeding with their preparations, until they should perceive some indication of a congenial moment of peace, in which to advance into a public consummation of their labor. And that when in the good providence of God, that moment did for a time appear, in the genius and spirit of the great and excellent Belcher, whom He sent to them—they then came forward with all confidence in obedience to that call—and that having once obtained an incorporation, agreeable in

\* Alden's Collection, as quoted by Dr. Green.



all respects to the greatness and piety of their own intentions, they not only cast off the previous imbecile instrument which had been tendered to them, but were willing to efface every memory of both it from their hearts and records.

As the name of Governor Belcher is so intimately connected with the history of this college, it will not be out of place to preface an account of the charter which his liberality and influence obtained for it, with some notice of his life.

"Jonathan Belcher, governor of Massachusetts, and afterwards of New Jersey, was the son of the Honorable Andrew Belcher, of Cambridge, one of his Majesty's Council in the province of Massachusetts Bay, and was born about the year 1681. He was graduated at Harvard College, in 1699. Not long after the termination of his collegial course, he visited Europe, and every opportunity was furnished him for the most liberal education. The acquaintance which he formed with the Princess Sophia and her son, afterwards George II. laid the foundation of his future honors. After his return he settled in Boston. He was chosen a member of Council, and having joined the popular side in the long contest which Massachusetts had with Gov. Burnet on the question of a permanent salary, he was sent as an agent of the Assembly to represent the views to the king. After the death of Gov. Burnet, he was appointed by his majesty to the government of Massachusetts and New Hampshire in 1730. In this station he continued eleven years. His style of living was elegant and splendid, and he was distinguished for hospitality.\* But with him, as in the case of some other leaders of democracy, the lavishness of his expenditure, though it was only to the ruin of his own fortune, exposed him to the censures and finally to the hatred of his own party; and though he abandoned none of his liberal principles, yet by his mistaken extravagance he affected an outward station that seemed to compromise them; and the result was some disputes between him and his legislature, which occasioned his removal. It is said that his enemies being unable to find any tangible ground of complaint, were so inveterate and unjust as to resort to forgery. The whole dispute and the issue of it bear a strong resemblance to all those cases

in history where the generous minded leader of a dominant liberal party had become so obnoxious to his friends on account of the extravagance, excited by his success, that they turned to be his enemies. And that kind of enmity is always the most violent, because it is always mixed with the exasperation of envy as well as that produced by the apparent dereliction. On being superseded, he repaired to court, successfully vindicated his character, was restored to royal favor, and soon after received his commission as Governor, &c. &c. of the province of New Jersey. He met the Assembly for the first time on the 20th of August, 1746. He died at Elizabethtown, Aug. 31, 1757, aged 76. His body was taken to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he was entombed. His general character is matter of common history, and as it is seen in connexion with this college, of which he was the chief patron and benefactor, will be amiable apparent in the extracts which follow. The commission of Gov. Belcher is attested in two instruments, one constituting him civil Governor, &c., the other commander-in-chief, &c.; the originals of both of which are in possession of the college. At this day, of course, they are interesting curiosities.

The first entry in the Minutes of the Trustees is a copy of the charter. The general provisions of this instrument are too public to call for any repetition, and that the great aim of the petitioners was the mutual advancement of "sound doctrine" and sound learning is also too well known to need any further extracts. The next entry is as follows :

"On Thursday, 13th of October, 1748, convened at New Brunswick.—James Hude, Andrew Johnston, Thomas Leonard, Esqs.;—Messrs. John Pierson, Ebenezer Pemberton, Joseph Lamb, William Tennent, Richard Treat, David Cowell, Aaron Burr, Timothy Jones, Thomas Arthur, Ministers of the Gospel,—William P. Smith, Gent. [Those trustees, whose appointment is mentioned in the charter, not present at this meeting were—The Governor, who is ex. off. president of the board—John Reading, John Kinsey, Edward Shippen and William Smith, Esqs.—Peter V. B. Livingston, and Samuel Hazard, Gents. Gilbert Tennent, Samuel Blair and Jacob Green, Ministers of the Gospel.]—thirteen of those nominated in the charter to be trustees of the college, who having accepted the charter, were qualified and incorporated according to the directions thereof; and being a quorum of the corporation, proceeded as the charter directs to choose a clerk.

"Thomas Arthur, chosen Clerk of the Corporation.

"Voted, That an address be made to the Governor, to thank his Excellency, for the grant of the charter—and that at least one of our number be appointed to wait on his Excellency and present the same.

"An address being drawn up by the Rev. Mr. Burr, was read and approved.

\* Extracted from "Allen's Biographical Dictionary."

"Ordered, that the Rev. Mr. Cowell wait upon his Excellency, and present the address to him.

"Ordered, that a copy of the address be taken by the clerks and inserted in the minutes."

That the style and temper of the men who undertook the establishment of the college may be understood in the most interesting manner, this address and the answer will be found inserted entire.

"To his Excellency, Jonathan Belcher, Esq., Captain, General and Governor in chief, of the province of New Jersey, and territories thereon depending in America and Vice-Admiral of the same.

"The humble address of the trustees of the college of New Jersey.

"May it please your Excellency—

"We have often adored that wise and gracious Providence, which has placed your Excellency in the chief seat of government in this province; and have taken our part with multitudes in congratulating New Jersey upon that occasion.

"Your long known, and well approved friendship to religion and learning, left us no room to doubt your doing all that lay in your power to promote so valuable a cause in these parts; and upon this head our most raised expectations have been abundantly answered. We do therefore cheerfully embrace this opportunity of paying our most sincere and grateful acknowledgments to your Excellency, for granting so ample and well contrived a Charter for erecting a seminary of learning in this province, which has been so much wanted and so long desired.

"And as it has pleased your Excellency to intrust us with so important a charge, it shall be our study and care to approve ourselves worthy the great confidence you have placed in us, by doing our utmost to promote so noble a design.

"And since we have your Excellency with us in this important and difficult undertaking, we shall engage in it with the more freedom and cheerfulness; not doubting but by the smiles of Heaven under your protection, it may prove a flourishing seminary of piety and good literature; and continue not only a perpetual monument of honor to your name, above the victories and triumphs of renowned conquerors, but a lasting foundation for the future prosperity of church and state.

"That your Excellency may long live a blessing to this province, an ornament and support to our infant college; that you may see your generous designs for the public good take their desired effect, and at last receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away,—is and shall be our constant prayer.

"By order of the trustees,

"THOMAS ARTHUR, Cl. Corp'n.

"New Brunswick, Oct. 13, 1748.

"To which his Excellency was pleased to return the following answer:—

"Gentlemen,

"I have this day received by one of your members, the Rev. Mr. Cowell, your kind and handsome address; for which I heartily return you thanks; and shall esteem my being placed at the head of this government, a still greater favor from God and the king, if it may at any time fall in my power as it is in my inclination, to promote the kingdom of the great Redeemer by taking the College of New Jersey under my countenance and protection as a seminary of true religion and good literature.

J. BELCHER."

"Thus were the trustees possessed of a naked charter, without any fund at all to accomplish the undertaking. This in the eyes of some gave it the appearance of an idle chimerical project. Their only resource indeed under the smiles

of heaven, was the beneficence of the advocates and friends of learning." (Pres. Finley.)

This first meeting of the corporation adjourned to meet at Newark.

"On Wednesday November 9, [1748,] the trustees met, according to appointment, at Newark.

The Governor and some gentlemen not previously qualified took the oath directed by the charter.

"The Rev. Mr. Lamb opened the session with prayer.

"The Rev. Mr. Aaron Burr was unanimously chosen to be the president of the college; the vote of the trustees being made known to Mr. Burr he was pleased modestly to accept of the same, and took the oath required by the charter.

"Agreed, that the commencement\* for graduating the candidates, that have been examined and approved for that purpose, go on this day.

"It was accordingly opened this forenoon by the president with prayer, and public reading of the charter in the meeting house.

"In the afternoon the president delivered a handsome and elegant Latin Oration. And after the customary scholastic disputations, the following gentlemen were admitted to the degree of bachelor of arts, viz. Enos Ayres, Israel Read, Benjamin Chesnut, Richard Stockton, Hugh Henry, Daniel Shaw.

"After which his excellency the Governor, was pleased to accept of a degree of master of arts: this was succeeded by a salutatory oration, pronounced by Mr. Shaw, and the whole concluded with prayer by the president.

"Met this evening. A set of laws were presented &c. Voted [among other things] that the anniversary commencement for the future, be held on the last Wednesday of September, and that the next commencement be held at New Brunswick.

"That William Smith Esq. be appointed to draw up an account of the proceedings of the commencement and insert it in the New York Gazette.

"That Messrs. Pierson, Cowell, Jones and Arthur be appointed to make application to the General Assembly of this province now sitting at Perth Amboy, in order to get the countenance and assistance for the support of the college.

"Voted that the following gentlemen be desired to take in subscriptions for the college.

Messrs. Kinsey and Hazard, at Philadelphia. P. Vanbrugh Livingston and P. Smith, New York. Read and Smith, at Burlington. Read and Cowell, Trenton. John Stevens, Amboy. Sam. Woodruff, Elizabeth Town. Thos. Leonard and John Stockton, Esq., Princeton. James Hude, Esq. and Thos. Arthur, at New Brunswick. Henderson and Furman, Freehold. John Pierson, Woodbridge. Major Johnson, Newark.

"That all the trustees shall use their utmost endeavors to obtain benefactions to the said college; That this meeting be adjourned to the third Thursday in May next to be held at Maidenhead.

"Mr. Tennant [Rev. William,] concluded with prayer."

The committee appointed to make application to the Assembly afterwards reported their ill reception—and was sent back on successive occasions with more urgent representations, but still reported the same success. And even

\* That word simply denotes the time when students in colleges commence bachelors; and the same word without much extension of its meaning is very naturally applied to the day and the public exercises of the day, when and whereby that event is celebrated.



a petition for a lottery was "absolutely rejected." "Whatever was the influence of Gov. Belcher, or the popularity of President Burr, their united exertions could never prevail on the legislature of the province" [in which respect there are some strong points of resemblance that seem not to have been altogether destroyed in the revolution which afterwards made them citizen representatives] "in which the college was founded, whose name it bore, and of which it was the greatest ornament, to show it patronage or favor of any kind. It is as grievous to the writer to record this want of liberality in a legislature of his native State, as it can be to any other inhabitant to read the record. But historical fidelity requires that the fact should not be suppressed. All the state-patronage which the college has ever received shall in its proper place, be faithfully stated. The writer has only to regret that the statement will so easily be made." (President Green.) "After various solicitations in America, the contributions, though often generous and worthy of acknowledgment, were found by no means adequate to the execution of so extensive a design. Therefore in the year 1753 two gentlemen [the Rev. Gilbert Tennent of Philadelphia, and the Rev. Samuel Davies, then of Hanover, Va., afterwards President of the College] were sent as agents to Great Britain and Ireland, to solicit additional benefactions. There the institution was honored beyond the most sanguine expectations, with the approbation and liberality of several political and ecclesiastical bodies; and of many private persons of the nobility and gentry, among the laity and clergy of various denominations." (Pres. Finley.)

The second commencement was held at New Brunswick, Sept. 27, 1749, at which a class consisting of seven was graduated. With this exception, the public conferring of degrees at commencement, took place at Newark, until after that of 1756, when the college was removed to Princeton. "The students, in the mean time, lived dispersed in private lodgings in that town; the public academical exercises being generally performed in the county courthouse. The difficulties and danger of these circumstances, both with regard to the morals and literary improvement of the youth, could scarcely have been encountered so long had it not been for the indefatigable industry and vigilance of Mr. President Burr. And it was much owing to his unremitted zeal and activ-

ity, that this college so suddenly rose to such a flourishing condition." The following extracts from the Trustee's minutes will set forth the circumstances of the location and erection of the present college edifice.

"Newark, Sept. 27th, 1752,

"His excellency Governor Belcher was pleased to deliver in a speech to the board of trustees, together with certain proposals respecting the important interests of the college; which being read, the trustees unanimously voted his excellency their hearty thanks, for his kind regard for the welfare of this infant Seminary; that his excellency's speech be drawn into the college books, and said proposals be taken under immediate consideration:

"His excellency's speech was in the following words:

"Gentlemen of the trustees of the college of New Jersey. 'Tis with much satisfaction that I meet you this day (being the anniversary of our commencement) hoping we are come together to act as with one heart and mind for the best establishment of our infant college, which I trust, by the favor of ALMIGHTY GOD, will become a singular blessing in this and the neighboring provinces; to the present and future generations.

"In the mean time I think it our duty to exert ourselves in all reasonable ways and measures, that we may have wherewith to build a house for the accommodation of the students, and another for the president and his family: And it seems therefore necessary, that, without further delay, we agree upon the place where to set these buildings. By the smiles of Heaven upon this undertaking the students have become so numerous as that 'the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it.' Besides, the way and method we are in, as to the place and manner of instructing the youth, looks to me like lighting a candle and putting it under a bushel. I therefore hope you will closely apply yourselves so as to come to a conclusion in this material article.

"J BELCHER."

"The trustees, taking into consideration that the people of New Brunswick have not complied with the terms proposed to them for fixing the college in that place, by the time referred to in the offer of this board; now voted, that they are free from any obligation to fix the college at New Brunswick.

The trustees agree that it should be put to vote, in what place the college shall be fixed, upon such conditions as this board shall propose.

"Voted that the college be fixed in Princeton; [upon certain conditions not interesting at this time.]

"The trustees appoint Messrs. President Burr, Samuel Woodruff, Jonathan Sergeant, Elihu Spencer and Caleb Smith, to be a committee to transact the above said affair with the inhabitants of Princeton; and that Elizabethtown be the place for accomplishing the same."

On the twenty-fourth of January, 1753, the trustees met at Princeton. The committee appointed to manage the affair with the Princeton people having exhibited their report, it was voted "that the said people have complied with the terms proposed to them for fixing the college in said place." On the 22d July, 1754, the trustees again met at Princeton, and appointed Thomas Leonard and Samuel Woodruff, Esqs., with Rev. Messrs. Cowell, William Tennent, Burr, Treat, Brain-

erd and Smith, to be a committee to act in behalf of the trustees, in building the college according to a plan that was agreed on at that meeting. The outlines of this plan were suggested by Mr. Shippen. The site of the building was selected by Messrs. Samuel Hazard and Robert Smith. It was designed and executed by the latter gentleman, an architect of Philadelphia. At the time of its erection it was thought to be "a noble building and to have made a handsome appearance." It had probably a better finish than it has now—it certainly was, for many years, the largest single building in our country, "and was esteemed to be the most conveniently planned for its purpose." In this lay the chief artistic merit it could claim—it has acquired its best ideality since, in its antiquity and associations. "It had an elegant hall of genteel workmanship, 40 feet square, with a neatly finished front gallery. In it was placed a small, though exceeding good organ, which was obtained by a voluntary subscription; opposite to which and of the same height, was erected a stage, for the use of the students, in the public exhibitions. It was also ornamented, on one side, with a portrait of his late majesty (George II.) at full length—and on the other with a like picture (and above it the family arms neatly carved and gilt) of his Excellency Gov. Belcher. These were with a valuable collection of books and other things bequeathed by the latter to this college. The library, which was on the second floor, was a spacious room furnished with about 1200 volumes (in the time of Pres. Finley from whose account of the college this description is extracted,) all of which are the gifts of the patrons and friends of the institution both in Europe and America. There was on the lower story, a commodious dining hall, &c." All these ornaments of the "hall" were destroyed by the British and American soldiery in the revolutionary war, and the whole interior edifice was destroyed by the fire of 1802.

On the 21th September, 1755, the trustees met at Newark and voted an expression of thanks to Governor Belcher for the bequests, a part of which are noticed above, and presented by President Burr and others in an address of which the following are some extracts. "We do heartily congratulate your Excellency on the signal success with which heaven has crowned your generous efforts, for the advancement of the interests of this noble

institution—an institution calculated to disperse the mists of ignorance and error—to cultivate the minds of the rising generation, with the principles of knowledge and virtue—to promote the real glory and intrinsic happiness of society. The extensive recommendations your Excellency was pleased to make in Great Britain of the college, and your countenance and encouragement offered our late mission, to solicit the benevolence of the friends of learning abroad, demand at this time our most thankful acknowledgments. We rejoice with you, Sir, on the favourable event of that necessary and laudable undertaking. An event which hath so amply enabled us to erect a convenient edifice." The exact amount of the benefactions here referred to cannot now be ascertained. It is known that the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland responded liberally to an application which the commissioners bore to them. This address to the Governor closes with a request, that "as the College of New Jersey views him in the light of its friend, patron and benefactor, and the impartial world would esteem it a respect deservedly due to the name of *Belcher*; he would permit them to dignify the edifice with that endeared appellation." "And when your Excellency is translated to a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens, let BELCHER HALL proclaim your beneficent acts, for the advancement of Christianity, and the emolument of the *arts and sciences*, to the latest ages." Governor Belcher's answer in as far as it relates immediately to the present subject, is—"I desire, in the first place, to give praise and thanks to Almighty God, and under him to the many generous benefactors who have contributed to the encouragement and establishment of the College of New Jersey; which affair I have been pursuing, free from all sinister views and aims, as a thing I believe to be acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour. And when in God's best time, I must go the way whence I shall not return, I shall lay down my head in the grave, with the greater peace and comfort, in that God has spared me to live to see the present flourishing state of the College; for whose future welfare and prosperity I shall pray in some of my latest moments.

"I take particular grateful notice of the respect and honor you are desirous of doing me and my family, in calling the edifice lately erected in Princeton by the name of *Belcher Hall*; but you will be so good as to excuse me,



while I absolutely decline such an honor, for I have always been very fond of a motto of a late great personage, *Prodesse quam conspici*. But I must not leave this head without asking the favor of your naming the present building NASSAU HALL: and this I hope you will take as a further instance of my real regard to the future interest and welfare of the College, as it will express the honor we retain, in this remote part of the globe, to the immortal memory of the glorious King *William* the third, who was a branch of the illustrious house of NASSAU. And God Almighty grant we may never want a sovereign from his loins to sway the British sceptre in righteousness." It was accordingly ordered "that the said edifice be, in all time to come, called and known as NASSAU HALL."

A narrative has now been given of the trembling and doubtful infancy of this College. It has been given in the words of those who watched over it—not that such a method of narrative is the most concise or least laborious, but because it is most profitable; and because however well a summary account might have declared the acts of these benevolent men, such an account could not have revealed their own purpose. As it is, only a partial impression can be produced of the honest excellence of their motives, or of their ceaseless vigilance and assiduity—a full conception of which, it is not possible to obtain, in any other way than by an examination into the minutes of the multiplied meetings of those gentlemen, by whose instrumentality the College of New Jersey has reached a stable existence among the like institutions of our land, and a pre-eminence among the benefactors of our country.

In the year 1756 the students to about the number of 70 removed from Newark; the college edifice being then so far completed as to be ready for their reception. The President's mansion—the building now occupied by our present worthy President—was also nearly finished at the same time. Experience soon taught the society the superior convenience of their new circumstances. The numbers increased very fast. The country became more and more convinced of the importance of learning in general, and the utility of such a seat of education in particular; both from the regularity of its administration, and the figure which several of its sons already made, in the various literary profes-

sions. But it was not long before it suffered what was then looked upon as an almost irretrievable loss. For this same year, died, universally deplored, Mr. PRESIDENT BURR. Few men were possessed, in an equal degree, of such an assemblage of talents. He seemed to be peculiarly formed for that important sphere of action, which was assigned him in the latter part of his life. The same year died, also, his Excellency, Governor Belcher.

In conducting the instruction of the students the labor of teaching, at this time, fell principally on the President. He sometimes had but one tutor to assist him, and never more than two while the college remained at Newark. President Burr had also the charge of a grammar school, during the whole time he was in office, in which pupils were prepared for the classes in College. This was considered a personal concern of the President, by whom the teachers in the school were employed. At the time of his death, the trustees took the grammar school under their care, as a part of the general establishment. It is thought to have been in the month of November when President Burr, in obedience to a vote of the trustees, passed on the 29th of September of the same year—the time of the last commencement held at Newark—"moved the College to Princeton." Mr. Burr did not live to preside at the commencement of 1757—having died two days before it took place.

In the minutes of the annual meeting of the trustees this year, is this entry:—"It having pleased God on the 24th of September, instant, to remove by death, the late reverend, pious and learned Mr. Burr, the President of the College—the trustees do elect and appoint the Hon. William Smith, Esq., to preside at the present commencement and confer the degrees on the candidates; and that the two oldest ministers being trustees begin and conclude with prayer."

No clergyman in the State of New Jersey was probably ever more beloved, respected and influential, than President Burr. To amazing talents for despatch of business, he joined a constancy of mind that commonly secured to him success. In the pulpit he shone with superior lustre. He was fluent, copious, sublime and persuasive. His invention was exhaustless, and his elocution was equal to his ideas. He possessed an uncommon urbanity of temper, with a force of determination that was equal to any emergency

to which he was called—the genial kindness of his heart and manner never failed to interest those with whom he came in contact. His modesty and unobtrusiveness were consistent with his erudition. To the church of which he was a minister, and to the college of which he was president, the loss and regret which his death occasioned, cannot now be easily estimated. It is supposed that the disease of which he died was greatly aggravated, if not entirely produced, by the exertions which he made in a state of exhaustion and debility, to prepare and preach the funeral sermon of Governor Belcher. The shock which the College felt by the fall of these two pillars, on which it had seemed principally to lean, was feared at the time to threaten it with lasting injury, if not with entire prostration.

Aaron Burr, the second President of this college, was born at Fairfield, Connecticut, in the year 1716. His ancestors for a number of generations, had lived in that Colony and were persons of great respectability. He descended, it is believed, from the Rev. Jonathan Burr of Dorchester. He was graduated at Yale College in 1735. In 1738 he was invited to take the pastoral charge of the Presbyterian church, at Newark, and was ordained as its pastor. Here he became so eminent as an able and learned divine, and an accomplished scholar, that in 1748 he was unanimously elected president of the college, as successor to Mr. Dickinson. Until the autumn of 1755, he discharged the duties both of president and pastor. At that time his pastoral relation to his people was dissolved; and he devoted himself wholly to the service of the college.

On the monument, placed over the grave of President Burr, in the burial ground of this town, by order of the college, is the following inscription, which is here inserted for the convenience of scholars, together with a translation of it, which has been procured for the information of such as doubtless would have been glad to read an inscription that has been so long in their midst, had it not been sealed up in a language which they may have had no opportunity to acquire.

M. S.

Reverendi admodum viri,  
AARONIS BURR, A. M., Collegii *Neo-Cæsariensis*  
Præsidis,  
Natus apud *Fairfield, Connecticutensium*, IV Januarii,  
A. D. MDCCXVI. S. V.  
Honesta in cadem Colonia Familia oriundus,

Collegio *Yalensi* innutritus,  
Novarcae Sacris initiatus, MDCCXXXVIII.  
Anno circiter viginti pastorali Munere  
Fideliter functus.  
Collegii N. C. Praesidium MDCCXLVIII accepit.  
In *Nassovia Aulam* sub Finem MDCCLVI translatus.  
Defunctus in hoc vico XXIV Septembris,  
A. D. MDCCXLVII. S. N.  
Ætatis XLII. Eheu quam brevis!  
Huic Marmorì subjicitur, quod mori potuit;  
Quod immortale, vendicarunt Coeli—  
Quæris viator qualis quantusque fuit?  
Perpaucis accipe.  
Vir corpore parvo ac tenui,  
Studiis, vigilis, assiduisque laboribus,  
Macro.  
Sagacitate, Perspicacitate, Agilitate,  
Ac Solertia, (si fas dicere)  
Plusquam humana, pene  
Angelica.  
Anima ferme totus.  
Omnigena Literatura instructus,  
Theologia præstantior:  
Concionator volubilis, suavis et suadus:  
Orator facundus.  
Moribus facilis candidus et jucundus,  
Vita egregie liberalis ac benificus:  
Supra vero omnia emicuerunt  
Pietas ac Benevolentia.  
Sed ah! quanta et quanta Ingenii,  
Industriae, Prudentiae, Patientiae,  
Caeterarumque omnium virtutum  
Exemplaria.  
Marmoris Sepulchralis Angustia  
Reticebit.  
Multum desideratus, multum  
Dilectus,  
Humani generis Deliciae.  
O! infandum sui Desederium,  
Gemit Ecclesia, plorat  
Academia:  
At Coelum plaudit, dum ille  
Ingreditur  
In Gaudium Domini  
Dulce loquentis,  
Euge bone et fidelis  
Serve!  
Abi viator tuam respice finem

SACRED TO THE MEMORY,—  
of a most venerable man  
AARON BURR, A. M., President of the *College of*  
*New Jersey*.  
He was born of a good family at *Fairfield Conn.*, on  
the 4th of January, A. D. 1716, O. S.  
He was educated at Yale College.  
Commenced his ministry at Newark, in 1738,  
He performed the pastoral office with fidelity about  
20 years.  
Accepted the Presidency of the College of New Jer-  
sey, in 1748.  
Being transferred to Nassau Hall at the close of 1756,  
he died in this village, on the 24th of September,  
A. D. 1757, N. S.  
Beneath this marble is laid, all of him that could die;  
His immortal part, Heaven has claimed—



Do you ask, Stranger, what he was ?

Hear in few words ;

He was a man of a small and weak body, spare with study, watching and constant labors,—

He had sagacity, penetration, quickness, and despatch, (if it be lawful to say so) more than Human, almost Angelic.

He was skilled in all kinds of Learning.

In Theology he excelled,

He was a fluent speaker, pleasing and persuasive. An accomplished Orator.

In his manners, easy frank, and cheerful ;

In his life remarkably liberal, and beneficent.

His Piety and Benevolence outshined all other qualities,

Ah, how numerous and how excellent, were his examples of Genius, Industry, Prudence,

Patience, and all other virtues,—

The narrow sepulchral marble refuses to speak them,

Greatly regretted, much beloved, he was the delight of human kind.

O, the unspeakable regret,

The Church groans, Learning Laments ;

But Heaven applauds, while he

enters into the joy of his Lord, and

hears, well done good and faithful servant.

Stranger, go and remember thy latter end.

The tombstone at Mr. Burr's grave was procured at the order of the board by Mr Robert Smith—it cost twenty pounds. The inscription upon it was prepared by the Hon. William Smith, Esq., and revised by the Rev. Messrs Jacob Green and Caleb Smith. The funeral sermon of President Burr was prepared and published at the request of the board by the last named gentleman. He had ordered the manner of his burial to be as simple as possible, and the amount of expense so saved to be distributed out of his estate to the poor.

The precise time when the college was removed from Newark to Princeton is not certainly known. It is supposed that all the necessary preparations were made immediately after the commencement of 1756,—and that the first college session in this place opened in the month of November succeeding. By whom the original code of college laws was produced is not known. They had been somewhat amended to adapt them to the new circumstances of the Institution beforehand, and were again soon after more fully revised by Messrs. Treat, W. Tennent and Spencer.\* These laws contain the substance of the present regulations.

In moral conduct, a strict observance of the Lord's day was especially insisted on—no student being permitted to have company, or to be unnecessarily absent from his room on that day or the evening previous. The tutors are enjoined to be frequently in the rooms to direct and encourage the students in their studies, and see that they be diligent about their proper business. The college worshipped in the Hall, at which occasion on the Sabbath, the people of the village united with them. The president was for some time the only pastor of the place. From the first, no intoxicating liquors of any sort were to be admitted into the college building under severe penalties : a second repetition of such an offence, wrought a resource to the final discipline. There is nothing peculiar in these laws as compared with the present, except some different modes of discipline, and except that the students were required to wear an uniform dress, which custom was soon after abolished. For venial offences the transgressor was usually mulcted in a pecuniary fine ; but not long after this time the officer was at liberty to substitute other punishment. For more serious violations of the laws the offender was generally subjected to a public reprimand and an open confession and promise of amendment, in cases which did not call for severer discipline. Each student upon entering college was required to transcribe the laws, which being signed by the President, was then delivered back to him to be preserved as the "testimony of his fellowship, and the Rule of his behaviour." The President together with the tutors had discretionary power to establish new rules for the government of the college, the President being held accountable for the exercise of it.

The salary of the President had not yet been rendered permanent. A yearly supply used to be voted for him at the annual meetings of the board. Perhaps this circumstance was owing as much to an extreme sensibility of the gentlemen of the board on the general question of a "permanent salary," which had distracted all the provincial governments in their turn for many years, as it was to the want of a permanent college fund. The yearly supplies voted to President Burr had varied progressively from 150 to 250 pounds *proce*. The following resolutions passed by the trustees at the commencement meeting of 1757, will answer a purpose in the present connexion, and a further purpose of showing in what

\* The individuals who at different times composed the board of Trustees, the data of their accession, &c., as well as the names and dates of the graduating classes, being accurately entered in the tri-ennial catalogues, any particular reference to such date will be unnecessary in this summary account of the college history. It will render this narrative more interesting to consult those catalogues in connection with it.

estimation the labors of the persons spoken of in them were held by the board. "The Trustees having considered that the salary which the last year was voted the Rev. Mr. President Burr was considerably increased on account of his constant attention, great zeal, and indefatigable labors for the interest of the college; and more especially for that the said President Burr for some years in the fore part of the executing his said office, had done many and great services for the said college, for which he never had received any pecuniary consideration. And that any president who now or hereafter may be chosen cannot for the services of this office for some time deserve so well of this board: It is therefore ordered that the salary of the president for the time being shall be the sum of two hundred pounds proclamation money of this Province, during the ensuing year; together with the use of the President's house and the improved lands, with liberty of getting his firewood on the lands belonging to the corporation."

"Voted, that the salary of each tutor hereafter shall be the sum of fifty pounds per annum; and that this board in consideration of the extraordinary services of Mr. Tutor Ewing, will allow the sum of fifty pounds over and above the said salary."

The college building was first ordered to be built of brick, without a basement story, and the President's house of wood. With the exception of the hall, library, steward's rooms, &c. the interior was thrown into rooms for the students. The general arrangements of these chambers must have been similar to the present ones. There were enough of them to contain 147 residents, three in a room. In the entry were placed two large ladders, to provide in case of fire; and from the ceiling of each room two "fire-buckets" were suspended. Nothing more concerning the descriptive character of this ancient house, or the peculiar customs of the college at this period can be found, or they would be given. For such minutiae are not only interesting but have their use. "And every drop of" the early institution, "that can be, shall be collected." An account of any single institution or undertaking which, from its antiquity or some other influence, has acquired a personality of its own, ought always to be in the simple and particular language of biography, and not in the constrained diction of history.

The class which graduated the year Presi-

dent Burr died numbered twenty-two. This number had been reached from the six which went forth in 1748 by a gradual increase. The course of instruction was, of course, not so extensive, as it now is, but it was very exact and thorough. "None might be expected to be admitted into college but such as being examined by the President and tutors should be found able to render Virgil and Tully's orations into English, and to turn English into true and grammatical Latin, and be so well acquainted with the Greek as to render any part of the four Evangelists in that language into Latin or English and give the grammatical construction." A successful passing thro' a public examination was necessary in order to obtain a degree. This condition was very rigidly enforced; the public disputations and speeches of the commencement were considered the least important part of the proceedings.

But by far the most interesting event which appears in the history of the college during the period under consideration is that of the first general revival of religion which the college has experienced. It commenced about six months before President Burr's death. An account of this revival is found in a letter of the Rev. Mr. (afterwards president) Davies to a religious friend in Great Britain, about four years after his mission thither in behalf of the college. It is dated "Hanover, June 3d, 1757;" and is as follows:

"The best news, that perhaps I ever heard in my life, I lately received from my favourite friend Mr. Samuel Finley, minister of Nottingham in Pennsylvania, tutor of a large academy, and one of the trustees of the college of New Jersey. I had sent him some extracts from my British letters, giving an account of the revival of religion in sundry parts of England, particularly among the clergy: in answer to which he writes thus:—'April 16, 1757, I greatly rejoice that our Lord Jesus has put it in my power to make you a large compensation for the good news you sent me. God has done great things for us.—Our glorious Redeemer poured out his Holy Spirit upon the students of our college, not one of all who were present neglected; and they were in number sixty. The whole house, say my correspondents, was a Bochim. Mr. William Tennent, who was on the spot, says, he never saw any in that case, who had more clear views of God, themselves and their defects, their impotence and misery, than they had in general; that there never was, he believes in any house, more genuine sorrow for sin and longing after Jesus: that this glorious work was gradual, and spread like the increasing light of the morning; that it was not begun by the ordinary means of preaching, nor promoted by alarming methods; yet so great was their distress, that he judged it improper to use any arguments of terror in public, lest some might sink under



the weight; that what maketh the gracious visitation more remarkable was, that a little before, some of the youth had given a greater loose to their corruptions, than was ordinary among them; a spirit of pride and contention prevailing to the great grief, and even discouragement of the worthy president: that there were no public outcries, but a decorous, silent solemnity; that before he came away several had received something like the spirit of adoption; being tenderly affected with the sense of redeeming love, and thereby disposed and determined to endeavor after universal holiness.'

'Mr. Treat and Mr. G. Tennent tell me in theirs, that the concern appeared rational, solid and scriptural; and that in a remarkable degree. I was informed by some of the students who had been my pupils, that this religious concern first began with the son of a very considerable gentleman of New York. The youth was dangerously sick at college; and on that occasion, awakened to a sense of his guilt. His discourses made some impression on a few others, and theirs again on more; so that it became almost general before the good President, or any others, knew anything of it. As soon as it became public, misrepresentations were spread abroad; and some gentlemen sent to bring their sons home. But upon better information the most were sent back again. The wicked companions of some young gentlemen left no methods untried, to recover them to their former excess of riot, and with two or three have been lamentably successful.

'Mr. Duffield (a worthy young minister) informed me the other day, that a very hopeful religious concern spreads through the Jerseys, especially among young people. In several letters from Philadelphia, from Mr. G. Tennent and others, I have assurance of a revival there, for which good people are blessing God. Lawyer Stockton\* informs me, that he is certified by good authority, of a gracious work of God at Yale College in New Haven.'

This, Sir, is some of the best news from one of the best of my correspondents. You will join with me in blessing God, and congratulating posterity, upon this happy, surprising revolution, in a college, to

which the eager eyes of so many needy churches look for supplies. Perhaps it may afford me the more pleasure, as my having taken so much pains to promote that institution, gives me a kind of paternal solicitude for it, though I live near 400 miles from it.

The finger of God is the more conspicuous in this affair, as the students, who had so often heard such excellent sermons from the worthy President, and from the many ministers from various parts, who occasionally officiated there, without any general good effects, should be universally awakened by means of a sick boy."

From the death of President Burr to the accession of President Edwards, a period of nearly six months, the government of the college was under the general supervision, first of the Rev. William Tennent, and afterwards of the Rev. David Cowell. The instruction of the students, during the same period, was almost wholly committed to the tutors; of whom there were three, and of these, John Ewing, afterwards the Rev. Dr. Ewing, for many years the distinguished Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, was the first in rank and in efficiency.

In the mean time the board of trustees were making exertions to procure the service of the Rev. Jonathan Edwards of Stockbridge, Mass. for the presidency of the college. The board which met to celebrate the commencement of 1757, two days after President Burr's death, did not adjourn until they had agreed upon the selection of Mr. Edwards as his successor. The address which communicated that resolution to him, and the request of the board that he would accept of the appointment was drawn up by Messrs. Livingston and Spencer. On the 14th day of December following, the trustees met to consider Mr. Edwards' answer. The letter which contains that, his first, answer is very remarkable. In it, he presents certain objections to his accepting the call of the board which grew out of the incidental circumstances of his situation at the time—but he especially reluctates to approach the important office tendered him from views of his own unfitness for the duties of it, and is astonished that gentlemen who knew him and his defects so well should have thought him competent for such an office.

The trustees, of course, were too well aware of Mr. Edwards' certain greatness, to be any otherwise influenced by this remarkable exhibition of his candor and humble-mindedness, except as it had an effect to exalt their admiration of him and to lead them to make more strenuous exertions to secure his services

\*"This gentleman, the father of the Hon. Richard Stockton, LL. D., deceased, was a member of the first class that was graduated in the college, the same day on which Mr. Burr was chosen President. He was, at this time, a trustee of the institution, active and influential in all its concerns. For several years he performed gratuitously, all the duties of the clerk of the board. He rose to great eminence in his profession; was a judge of the court under the royal government, and Chief Justice of the State of New Jersey, after the declaration of American Independence. Of the Congress which declared that Independence he was a member, and his name is inscribed in the imperishable roll that accompanies the instrument by which it was made known to the world.—Nor was it the least of his honors that he was 'not ashamed of the gospel of Christ;' but was as the above article shows, a friend to revivals of religion. He publicly professed religion, adorned it by his life, and experienced its support and consolation in the hour of death." (Pres. Green.)

for the college.

The board, therefore, turned their immediate attention to the other objections contained in Mr. Edwards' reply. Having requested a convocation of the Commissioners of the Society in London, for propagating the gospel in the American colonies, in Massachusetts, under whom Mr. Edwards then held his pastoral cure, at the Indian settlement of Stockbridge in that state; they sent Messrs. Caleb Smith and John Brainerd to attend the council convened in compliance with that request, and represent in behalf of the board of trustees the reasons for the propriety of Mr. Edwards' dismission from his connection with their Society.

That mission was successful, as appears from an entry in the minutes of the 16th February 1758. "The Rev. Jonathan Edwards, at the repeated requests and invitations of this board, and agreeable to a vote passed at a meeting of the board in September last, attending, and having been pleased to accept the office of President of this college, so unanimously voted him, was qualified as the Charter directs; and the said President Edwards was at the same time qualified as a trustee of the college and took his seat accordingly."

On Wednesday the 19th day of April in the same year the trustees met again, and made a resolution of which this is the preamble:—"It having pleased God to remove by death, the late Rev Mr. Edwards, President of the college, a few weeks after he had taken on him the charge of the college." President Edwards died, on the 22d March, 1758. He arrived in this place in the latter part of January. His death was occasioned by a fever which had set in while he was recovering, as it was supposed, from inoculation for the small-pox. The disease of which he was inoculated was prevalent in this region at that time.

He said but very little in his sickness: but was an admirable instance of patience and resignation to the last. Just at the close of life, as some persons, who stood by, expecting he would breathe his last in a few minutes, were lamenting his death not only as a great frown on the college, but as having a dark aspect on the interests of religion in general; to their surprise, not imagining he heard, or ever would speak another word, he said, "Trust in God, and ye need not fear." These were his last words. What could have been more suitable to the occasion! and what need of more!

Although President Edwards had been connected with the college but two months and had been formally inaugurated but five weeks before his death, yet the college by the act of selecting this eminent man for its president acquired reputation, and President Edwards by cordially accepting that appointment has identified his own history with the history of the institution.

While at this place, before his sickness he preached in the college hall sabbath after sabbath to the great acceptance of the hearers. His first sermon here was on the "unchangeableness of Christ;" it may be found in the eighth volume of his works. Besides preaching regularly in the chapel he had not entered into any systematic labors of his office other than to give out questions in divinity to the Senior Class, to be discussed before him. The instructions communicated by their president at those discussions impressed the class with such a view of his amazing erudition and exegetical acumen, that they ever after spoke of them with wonder.

Mr. Edwards' reputation as a theologian, and a man of most comprehensive reason is well enough known, and in this aspect it is proper only for those to undertake to describe him who are able to understand him. But there is another view in which President Edwards was a higher style of man than any greatness of mere intellect could have made him; a view in which the power of his understanding applied to the education of his heart has made his influence complacent and accessible to all. The following extracts are introduced for the purpose of showing in the simple words of ordinary observers, that this great man is one of the few men, who with all the natural irritability and the incessant valetudinary temperament of genius, had attained that grand point of steady faith and unvarying righteousness—that calm and equable sedateness of piety and wisdom—which seems to approach to the description of that in man which is near to the limit of his human perfection.

The physician who attended him says that he had the uninterrupted use of his reason to the last, and died with perfect calmness and composure. "Never did any mortal man more fully and clearly evidence the sincerity of all his professions, by one continued, universal, calm, cheerful resignation and patient submission to the divine will, through every



stage of his disease, than he."

By another person President Edwards is described as "an eminent servant of God—a gentleman of heavenly temper of mind; a most rational christian admired by all who knew him, for his uncommon catholic candor and benevolence—a pattern of temperance, meekness, patience and charity; always steady, calm and serene." The man who, with the intellect and genius of President Edwards has attained a character for virtue so exalted and so forcible that the commonest descriptions of him possess the genuine eloquence of those above quoted, is one of the persons before whom his fellow men may stand as before a most excellent wonder of their race.

The following is the inscription on the monument which covers the remains of President Edwards, in the burial-ground of this town:—

M. S.

Reverendi admodum Viri,

JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M.

Collegii Novæ Cæsareæ Præsidis.

Natus apud Windsor Connecticutensium V. Octobris.

A. D. MDCCIII, S. V.

Patre Reverendo Timotheo Edwards oriundo,

Colegio Yalensi educatus;

Apud Northampton Sacris initiatus, XV Februarii,

MDCCXXVI—VII.

Illinc dimissus XXII Junii, MDCCCL,

Et Munus Barbaros instituendi accepit.

Præses Aulæ Nassovicæ creatus XVI Februarii,

MDCCLVIII.

Defunctus in hoc Vico XXII Martii sequentis, S. N.

Ætatis LV, heu nimis brevis!

Hic jacet mortalis Pars.

Qualis Persona quæris Viator?

Vir Corpore procer, sed gracili,

Studiis intensissimis, Abstinencia, et Sedulitate,

Attenuato.

Ingenii Acumine. Judicio acri, et Prudentia,

Secundus Nemini Mortalium.

Artium liberalium et Scientiarum Peritia insignis,

Criticorum sacrarum optimus, Theologus eximius,

Ut vix alter æqualis; Disputator candidus;

Fidei Christianæ Propugnator validus et invictus;

Concionator gravis, serius, discriminans;

Et, Deo favente, Successu

Felicissimus.

Pietate præclarus, Moribus suis severus,

Ast aliis æquus et benignus,

Vixit dilectus, veneratus—

Sed ah! lugendus

Moriebatur.

Quantos Gemitus discedens ciebat!

Heu Sapientia tanta! heu Doctrina et Religio!

Amissum plorat Collegium, plorat et Ecclesia;

At, eo recepto, gaudet

Cælum.

Abi Viator, et pia sequere Vestigia.

The author of the above inscription does not appear in the records; the following is a translation of it:—

Sacred to the memory

of a most venerable man JONATHAN EDWARDS, A. M.

President of the College of New Jersey.

He was born at Windsor in Conn., on the 5th of October,

A. D. 1703, O. S.

His father was the Rev. Timothy Edwards.

He was educated at Yale College, and commenced his ministry at Northampton 15th of Feb. 1726-7.

He was dismissed from that place, on the 22d of June 1750, and undertook the office of teaching the Savages.

He was made President of Nassau Hall the 16th of Feb. 1758.

Died in this village the 22d of March following, N. S., in the 55th year of his age.

In person he was tall and slender, thin with intense study, abstinence and application.

In the piercing subtlety of his genius, in judgment and Prudence he was second to none.

He was distinguished by skill in the liberal Arts and Sciences; the best of sacred critics;

An eminent Theologian, with scarcely an equal.

A candid disputant;

A strong and invincible defender of the Christian faith;

a Preacher impressive, serious, discriminating, and by the blessing of God, most successful.

Eminent for piety, severe in his morals,

but, just and considerate towards others.

He lived beloved, revered.

but oh! he is to be mourned, dead;

What lamentations, did his departure call forth!

Alas for so much wisdom, learning and religion!

The college bewails his loss,

The church bewails him.

Go, Stranger, and follow his pious steps.

From the death of President Edwards to the accession of President Davies, who succeeded him, was an interval of a few days more than four months; namely, from the 22d March, 1758 to the 26th July, 1759.

On Wednesday April 19th 1758, the trustees were called together. "After prayers particularly on account" of the object of their convocation being made, they elected Rev. James Lockwood of Wethersfield in the Colony of Connecticut to the office of President of the college. Mr. Lockwood declined accepting the appointment; for what reason does not appear. But it may be inferred from the phraseology of the vote which carried his election, that it wanted more unanimity than he was willing to proceed upon in accepting the offer.

On the sixteenth of August succeeding, the Presidency was offered to the Rev. Samuel Davies of Virginia, in the terms of a vote which declared him to be "duly elected." This offer as thus presented Mr. Davies declined to accept, probably for the same reasons

as those which influenced Mr. Lockwood. Or at least he may not have considered the call sufficiently decisive to warrant him in severing the important and interesting relations which he sustained to the people of his pastoral charge. The opinions of the board, at this time, on the choice of a president, had been divided among several candidates. At the time when the question was put, after the trustees had received Mr. Davies' first reply, those candidates were reduced to two, and Mr. Davies was again chosen. In obedience to this call he came to Princeton, entered upon the presidency of the college, on the 26th July, 1759, and on the 26th September following, was inaugurated, and took the oaths of the office. The opposing candidate at the time of President E. Davies' final election was the Rev. Samuel Finley. A man in competition with whom, a majority must have been esteemed more honorable and more decisive, than an unanimous selection out of many less eminent candidates.

In the absence of a stated presidency during the period under consideration, that office was temporarily administered for the first six months of that time by the Rev. Messrs. Samuel Finley and Caleb Smith. The latter gentleman probably presided at the commencement of 1758.

On Wednesday the 22d of November, in the same year, the trustees, after having received the first reply of President Davies, anticipating difficulty in the selection of a president, and "considering that the former flourishing state of the college was greatly affected by its being so long destitute of a fixed president"—created a Vice Presidency of the college, and appointed the Rev. Jacob Green to serve in the capacity of that office until a president should be chosen. Mr. Green accepting, was accordingly at the same meeting, qualified.

He executed the vicarious duties consequent upon his office in the absence of any principal officer, from the time of his appointment until the arrival of President Davies—a period of more than half a year.

The trustees, who at different times, were temporarily chosen to act as presiding officers in the college, always preached to the students, and probably gave them some religious instructions of a more private kind. Besides the observance of these duties, and the general exercise and superintendence of the disciplinary functions of the office, Finley, Smith and

Green, in their turns, were employed as teachers in language and science.

The senior Tutor, upon whom fell the brunt of the actual labor of giving instruction and preserving order, in the absence of a stated president, was, at this time, Mr. Jeremiah Halsey; who is often spoken of, in the minutes, with approbation for his extraordinary services.

Messrs. Caleb Smith, David Cowell and Richard Stockton, were the committee of the trustees, who "managed the affair of Mr. Davies' removal" to this place.

The Rev. Messrs. John Brainerd, Caleb Smith and Elihu Spencer, had at this time been appointed by their Presbyteries, to attend the Synod of New York and Philadelphia, which bodies had been able, by the year previous, to come together again into some kind of a rational and amicable ecclesiastical union. The gentlemen of this synodical commission, being members of the board, were further commissioned by the trustees of the college to negotiate, with that Synod, the matter of Mr. Davies' dismissal from his pastoral connexion. It is probably well known that from the union of these two Synods arose the present General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S. of America. It was to that united judicatory that the college was at this time accountable for the interest of a fund of £500 which had been formed by donations obtained in England and Scotland by Messrs. Tennent and Davies, at the same time that they were on their mission in behalf of the college, for the education of poor and pious youth for the gospel ministry. This fund was originally loaned to the college by the Synod of New York.

The pecuniary condition of the Board up to the period of time under review, is somewhat pathetically apparent in a resolution of dismissal, for which one of the tutors applied, which says that "the trustees do with great reluctance part with the said applicant, and as a testimony of their sense of his good conduct and merit do present him with the sum of ten pounds over and above his salary—and are sorry that the smallness of their Funds, will not permit of their giving him a larger sum."

The President's house was completed in August of the year '58. It cost 600 pounds, and a surplus which occasioned a difficulty with the contractor, that rendered necessary the interposition of referees to determine the issue. The rooms in the college building were finished only as occasion called for them. The num-



ber of Students since the death of President Burr, and in the general absence of any stated head-officer, had considerably diminished.

At one of the meetings of the Board in 1758, a petition was presented from the Freshman Class, asking for the dismission of a tutor on the ground of his not being sufficiently qualified for the business of instruction. The trustees considered the petition and dismissed the officer, not on the ground offered in the petition, but because the expected coming of the President, would render his services unnecessary. They then passed a law that "No Scholar or Scholars shall on any account present any petition or complaint to the Board of Trustees, against any tutor or tutors, or any other officer, until he or they shall first have acquainted the President and obtained his leave, and in case there is no president, they shall obtain the permission of three trustees; yet notwithstanding if the President, or when there is no president, the three trustees to whom they apply, shall refuse to give leave to bring in such complaints or petitions; the scholars may present them to the board of trustees, after they have given three months notice, to the President, or in his absence, the three trustees, and also to the tutor or tutors against whom the complaint—or petition is."

This is a pretty strong acknowledgment of the right of petition,—a right which necessarily implies the relation of constituents and an authority, to some degree at least, delegated by them,—in the case of a society, in which the dependence of the governors and the governed, involve none of the ideas of a civil or political association or compact; and which never can be well governed, except upon those principles, of parental influence and solicitude which appertain to the true source of its authority. Those persons, who choose to place themselves under the influence of an incorporated institution like a college, can never claim to have any separate existence of their own as an antagonist portion of the society, or as a constituent portion of it, except as they become coincident with and absorbed by the only one and undivided sovereignty that constitutes that society. The only resource of individuals, in such cases, if they dislike the management of the corporation or its officers, if it does not of itself afford them the protection or advantage which it has promised, is to break their connexion with it. Otherwise, a spirit of importance and insubordination will

be fostered, when a dependant object of care and authority thus comes to consider itself as having a constituent civil relation and community with the only portion of the society that has all the civil existence of it—which must necessarily contravene and distort the purpose for which such an institution was established.

In the latter part of the college period under review, there was also proposed to the consideration of the trustees "a plan of union among the several colleges in these Provinces, drawn up by Mr. President Clap of Yale college in Connecticut, which being read was referred for further consideration." It does not appear, however, that the subject was ever after resumed.

At the meeting of the trustees held on Wednesday Aug. 16th, 1758, His Excellency Francis Bernard Esq. Governor of the Province of New-Jersey, attended for the first time, and was qualified according to the charter and took his seat as President of the Board.

#### PRESIDENT DAVIES' ADMINISTRATION.

From July 26th, 1759, to Feb. 4th, 1761; A period of one year and six months.

The first resolution that presents itself in the minutes of the meeting of September, '59, at which President Davies was qualified, after the despatching of some fiscal matters relating to his removal, &c., is one whereby the trustees relinquish again any property or control in the Grammar School that was connected with the college, and transfer the whole establishment and the profits of it to the President. Ever since the death of President Burr this part of the college seems to have been a source of trouble and vexation, and it is probable that such a preparatory school could never have been kept under good order except by the uncommon business energy of such an extraordinary man and scholar as was President Burr. And it is doubtful whether any superintending officer should in any case be able to make such a separate subordinate undertaking entirely work in with the general design of the principal College institution. They are much better apart. For besides that the teacher and the professor are in many important respects distinct professions—and that the ends of either cannot be well promoted without a division of the labor—there are many prudential reasons why a grammar school and a college should not only

be distinct institutions, but are better to be even in different places from each other. At any rate, in the present instance, this grammar school was soon afterwards abandoned.

The next resolution of the Board at the same meeting, appoints Governor Bernard, Messrs. Davies, Peartree Smith, W. Tennent, Finley, Green, Cummings and Stockton, or any three of them, to be a committee to draw up a system of regulations concerning admission into college, with the necessary qualifications for degrees. At a subsequent meeting this committee produced an elaborate and highly finished report, which contains the substance of the present regulations on those subjects. The peculiar points in it are,—that candidates for the second degree, if alumni of the college, should reside at college in ordinary cases, for one week before the conferring of the degree, and submit to the laws and orders of college; and be examined on such branches of literature as the trustees present should think necessary, and make such preparations for commencement as the faculty should judge proper. That graduates from other colleges should be admitted *ad eundem* without examination—and that if they were candidates for a higher degree than they had elsewhere received, they should, also, reside a week at college, and submit to examination. That any person might have liberty to offer himself, at the public examination, as a candidate for a bachelor's degree. That candidates for any class higher than the freshman, should not only be previously examined as usual, but recite for two weeks upon trial.\*

One object in quoting the above resolution in this place, is to quote the names of the individuals who compose the committee which, together with the names of Messrs. Brainard, Cowell, Shippen, Caleb Smith, Treat, Spencer and \*Blair, are those which, up to this time generally, have appeared most frequently at the meetings and most prominently in the minutes of the board.

On the second day of this same meeting a large committee was appointed to consider of proper measures to enlarge the fund and ex-

tend the usefulness of the college. This committee met at Amboy on the 24th October succeeding, but could come to no conclusion on the subject of the appointment that seemed feasible or likely to be very successful. The incessant difficulty under which the college was toiling from the beginning to this time and onward, cannot be easily made apparent, with the same impressiveness with which it strikes a reader of the minutes. The painful labour, of an Institution, conscious of the merit of its design, yet obliged to feel about in every direction for pecuniary assistance, is manifest on every page. Almost every resolution savors of an abiding sense of poverty. And in the carrying out of their best purposes each syllable of the record is constrained to calculate the depth of the Treasury before it looks at the magnitude of its intention. Among other means the trustees applied for the use of lotteries, in order to procure funds. Such instruments are not esteemed very prudent now, but they were not thought noxious, then, or such men would not have made use of them.

Another resolution found in the voluminous and important report of the same meeting, from which the above incidents have been extracted, and which was continued, by adjournments, through three successive days, is,—“That for the future the President or tutors who shall at that time officiate, have liberty to appoint any of the students to read a portion of the sacred scriptures, out of the original language at evening prayers: and that when they think proper they may substitute psalmody, instead of the reading of the Scriptures, at evening prayers.” The practice which this vote originated, and which was long continued, consisted in translating from the original into the vernacular, only from the New-Testament. And notwithstanding the liberty given, the custom only applied to the officiating officer.

Another resolution, is concerning the method of imposing pecuniary fines, which has already been spoken of; whereby it is made optional with the officers of college to substitute other kinds of discipline. Pres't Finley says, of the law previously to its being thus amended, that “it would seem to be punishing parents for the offences of their children,” and apologises for its infliction by saying that it was seldom done and the fines were always small, and that under his Presidency, when he wrote, the law had never been resorted to.

“Voted, that for the future the President

\* This was the Rev. Samuel Blair, a clergyman and Teacher of eminent reputation. It was under him that President Davies prosecuted his preparatory studies—and it was of him, that President Davies, after his return from Europe, upon being asked his opinion of British pulpit orators, said “there were none that excelled, and few that equalled his old instructor.”



and tutors, in conjunction with any other gentlemen of liberal education who shall choose to be present, do, between the examination (of the graduating class) and public commencement, annually examine theseveral classes, and that such as are found unqualified shall not be allowed to rise in the usual course." President Green says that "Mr. Davies is believed to have suggested this regulation, which has been regarded from his time to the present, (1812) and with increased strictness. For a number of years past the whole college has been closely examined four times a year. Degradation from a class, however, has seldom taken place, except at the end of a term or session. Nothing has more contributed to render education in this institution efficient, than the strictness of examinations, and not suffering those to advance who have been found grossly deficient in the studies of the class to which they have belonged, and of course the refusing of degrees to those who have not had some fair claim, from actual qualifications, to receive them."

It is probable that the plan and principles upon which the college examinations have been conducted, were never so complete and impartial as at this time. The whole college by its classes, is now subjected to an annual, semi-annual and quarterly examination, by means of printed papers,—the course adopted by the European colleges,—and the only mode of testing the exact and full amount of understanding of the subject of examination, which the student may have obtained. Besides these stated seasons of examination the classes undergo a weekly review, under the inspection of the respective officers of the classes. The entire system of teaching is, in accordance with the practice at examination, that of a deliberate and minute analysis, the aim of which is to educate the man to an universal method, rather than to inform his memory with mere descriptive knowledge.

"September 24th, 1760, Ordered, that Messrs. Davies, Wm. Tennent, Cowell and Stockton, draw up an historical account of the rise, progress, and present state of the college, and print the same assoon as they conveniently can." The prosecution of the labor assigned to this committee was interrupted by the death of President Davies. It was not completed till the time of President Finley. The pamphlet containing the history, &c. of the college which President Finley published in 1764, in

accordance with the above order, has become so scarce, that a copy of it is not now to be found anywhere in the neighborhood of the college. It is quoted by President Green. It was illustrated by a very well executed plate, exhibiting a view of the front of the college edifice, the yard which lay before it, and a part of the President's house.\*

The College of New Jersey seems to have been fated to have a large host of most eminent men for its Presidents, to have them in rapid succession, and to have them die.

In the space of less than twenty years appear *Dickinson, Burr, Edwards, Davies, Finley*;—behold the array! They tarry, in some instances almost literally, a few days, and disappear from the college and the world. It may with a most painful and lamentable emphasis be said to have been the custom of the Institution in those its days of glory and of sorrow.

President Davies died on the 4th day of February, 1761, having remained in office but a few days more than eighteen months. He was a little more than thirty-six years old at the time of his decease. His life affords one of the most remarkable and interesting biographies that can be found anywhere. And it is a great pity that the limits of the present compilation will not allow of anything more than a meagre gleanings from the many important and radical facts that appear in the short, but extensive life and example of this remarkable man; covering and giving character as they do in their bearing and influence upon it, to one of the most essential periods in the history of our country, and of the church in this land. The influence which Mr. Davies, as a politician and philanthropist alone, directly exerted over one of the most active and intelligent sections of the country, during that important crisis of our national history, when those principles of government, under which, soon after, were declared those necessary and indispensable facts of colonial society and civilization, that were the ostensible points of contest in the war of the American revolution, and which

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\* It may be satisfactory to any body who may take an interest in knowing the kind of recreations which the collegians affected in these times, to advert to an incident in the minutes about this date, which shows that the youths had turned the side of the President's house, into a ball-alley wall—even before the mortar had dried in it. They were prohibited under a penalty of 5s. proc. from playing any more against it.

have since been confirmed in the theory of the American Republic,—the influence of Mr. Davies in assisting to control and illustrate those principles while in their commencing formation, ought to establish his claim to the character of a great and good man, in the view of all such as look upon the result of the American Revolution as a great and good announcement to the nations of the world.

It is not possible to tell how far the decisive action which was taken by the house of Burgesses of Virginia, at the time of the commencement of that revolution may have been affected by the influence which Mr. Davies' opinions and eloquence exerted in that colony. But it is well known that from the eleventh to the twenty-second year of his age, Patrick Henry heard the patriotic sermons which Mr. Davies had delivered during that time, and which were said to have produced effects as powerful as those ascribed to the orations of Demosthenes; that he was an enthusiastic admirer of Mr. Davies and his opinions—and it has been said that it was Mr. Davies who first kindled the fire and afforded the model of Henry's elocution. But how much more worthy and imperative must have been the influence of Mr. Davies, when to his enlarged patriotism and powerful eloquence he added the sincere and earnest piety of a most rational christian, and the superior eminence which his ministerial office gave him in that character. In his case, moreover, he possessed as a clergyman the superior power which an abiding impression that he had been peculiarly called to that holy office was calculated to impart. For he always considered himself as *devoted* to the ministry from his birth. His mother supposed that there were some points connected with the time of his birth analogous to those connected with the birth of Samuel as narrated in Scripture. Hence his christened name. He himself took the same view of the matter, under that view and the influence of it he felt and acted, and it would not be wise, in any aspect, to consider President Davies as a superstitious man. But whatever may have been the secret additional source of his extraordinary influence as a holy minister, it is certain that as it regards the qualities of his style and eloquence there never was a greater pulpit orator produced in America.

His popularity in Virginia was unbounded; so that he was invited and urged to preach in almost all the settled portions of that colony.

And it is said, that from the first time he delivered a sermon, he seldom preached to a vacant congregation, anywhere, from whom he did not immediately receive a call. His eloquence was equally attractive in foreign countries. After his return from a visit to Britain, and while considering the call of the trustees, to the presidency of this college, he had also under consideration calls, which invited him to settle in the ministry in that kingdom.

It was when Mr. Davies was in the twenty-fourth year of his age, that he was settled in Virginia. He took charge of a congregation having seven separate churches, the nearest distance between any two of them being twelve miles, and the distance between the extremes being forty. At this time Episcopacy, according to the order of the church of England, was the religion established and supported by law; and the "act of uniformity" was enforced with even greater rigor than in the mother country. The "act of toleration" had been passed in England, expressly for the relief of protestant dissenters; but it was made the subject of earnest controversy in Virginia, whether this latter act was intended to have any reference to the colonies. Mr. Davies maintained that it was as applicable to the colonies as to the mother country; and that if the act of toleration was not law in Virginia, the act of uniformity was equally destitute of legal authority in the same colony. On this point he had a long controversy with the king's Attorney General, Peyton Randolph, afterwards the President of the first Continental Congress, and with the general court of the colony. On one occasion he appeared personally before the court, and replied in such a manner to the Attorney General, as to impress even his enemies with the highest admiration of his knowledge, address and eloquence. At this time he had hardly passed the twenty-fourth year of his age. He maintained his cause inflexibly, till, when he went to England, to solicit benefactions for the college, he brought the subject before the king and council; and received from the Attorney General, Sir Dudley Rider, a declaration, under authority, that the provisions of the act of toleration did extend to the colony of Virginia.

It has been already stated that in 1753, Mr. Davies accompanied the Rev. Gilbert Tennent of Philadelphia, on a mission to Great Britain, to solicit donations for the college. They embarked on Saturday, November 17th, 1753.



Two months previous to his departure on this mission, Mr. Davies attended the commencement of the college at Newark, when he delivered a Thesis—*Personales Distinctiones in Trinitate sunt acternae*—and vindicated it, in a public dispute, against three opponents; and afterwards received the degree of Master of Arts.

As the voyage, upon which he then entered, is a proper part of the college history, a single extract taken from his journal, of the 19th of November, is here given. It is characteristic, of the romantic and active genius and affectionate heart of the author. "We are now out of sight of land—*Coelum undique, undique pontus*. It would be particularly pleasing to me to see the wonders of the majestic ocean; but I have been confined to bed most of the day, and am so much out of my element, that I am neither fit for conversation, nor curious observation. However, I feel calm within and resigned to the divine will—O Lord bless my dear family."

He arrived at London on the 25th December—prosecuted the object of his mission, with zeal and success—became acquainted with the leading characters in Britain—established his own reputation among them as a man of uncommon genius and incomparable eloquence, and returned to this country in the latter part of the year '54.

When he hastened to his family and people in Virginia he found that colony in a state of universal alarm in consequence of hostile invasion by the French and Indians. There was even much talk of abandoning a part of the colony to the enemy. On the 10th July, 1755, General Braddock sustained his remarkable defeat, and the remnant of his army was saved by the courage and skill of Colonel Washington, then only twenty-three years old. On the 20th of this month, Mr. Davies preached a sermon "on the defeat of Gen. Braddock going to Fort Du Quesne." In this sermon he calls on all his hearers, in the most impassioned and animating strains, to show themselves men, Britons and christians, and to make a noble stand for the blessings they enjoyed. The negroes had been tampered with by the enemy and it was expected that they would rise and join them. Davies' influence among the blacks was unbounded, and he swayed the insurrectionists into obedience and duty. In August of the same year, he delivered a sermon, in Hanover, to Capt. Overton's company of Inde-

pendent volunteers, under the title of "Religion and Patriotism the constituents of a good soldier." It was in this sermon that he uttered the celebrated prediction concerning the youth Washington, which, since its verification in the after example of that great man of humanity as the selected instrument and as the embodied declarer of that spirit and those principles which established the republican government of America, has been so often quoted as a fulfilment almost of prophecy. "As a remarkable instance of this," (that is, of the fact that God had been pleased to diffuse some sparks of martial fire through the country) "I may point out to the public, that heroic youth, Colonel Washington, whom I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto *preserved in so signal a manner, for some important service to his country.*" On another occasion he preached a sermon to the militia of Hanover county, at a general muster, May 8th, 1759, with a view to raise a company of volunteers, for Capt. Meredith. At the close of the discourse a quota was immediately filled up, and the captain was obliged to refuse the names of many more that offered. The preacher repaired from the muster ground to the tavern, to order his horse: and the whole regiment followed him, and pressed round him to catch every word that dropped from his lips. On observing their desire, he stood in the tavern porch, and again addressed them, till he was exhausted with speaking.

The account of his separation from his people in Virginia, to enter upon the presidency of the College, is pathetic in the highest degree. Probably no man, in analogous circumstances, ever went through a more difficult contest, than he did in coming to a determination to break his pastoral connexions, by accepting the call of the trustees. On one side were a people, so devoted, that if it had been possible they would have plucked out their own eyes and have given them to him, and who were clinging to him, and weeping at the least mention of the word that they should see his face no more—his own corresponding affection for them—and his sense of unfitness for the office by reason of his want of scientific attainments. On the other hand the reiterated applications of the trustees, and the repeated advice of councils called to liberate for him, that it might be his duty to obey. He undoubtedly denied himself and obeyed.

His death has been attributed to his being unskilfully bled. It was more probably precipitated by his unremitting application to study, and to the duties of his office. His previous situation had afforded little leisure, and comparatively few means for the cultivation of general science. To qualify himself, in this respect, for his new sphere of labor, his application to study was intense and unremitting. He rose by break of day and seldom retired to rest till midnight. His great application at this time was, however, only peculiar to him except in view of the momentary excess of it; for notwithstanding the uncommon rapidity of his genius he was at all times a man of the closest application to study. He always dreaded to preach without careful preparation. He declared that "every discourse of his, which he thought worthy of the name of a sermon, cost him four day's hard study, in the preparation." When pressed to preach extemporaneously, he used to reply—"It is a dreadful thing to talk nonsense in the name of the Lord." Towards the close of January 1761, he was seized with a bad cold, for which he was bled. The same day he transcribed for the press his sermon, on the death of king George the Second. The day following he preached twice in the College chapel. The arm in which he had been bled—surely from a cause sufficiently obvious—became much inflamed, and his febrile disposition was much increased. On the morning of the succeeding Monday, he was seized, while at breakfast, with violent chills succeeded by an inflammatory fever, which in ten days terminated his life. The violence of his disease mastered his reason, through most of his sickness.

A few days before the beginning of the year in which Mr. Davies died, an intimate friend told him that a sermon would be expected from him on New Year's day; adding among other things, that President Burr, on the first day of the year in which he died, preached a sermon on Jer. xxviii. 16. "Thus saith the Lord, this year thou shalt die"—and that after his death the people remarked that it was peremptory. Mr. Davies replied, that "although it ought not to be viewed in that light, yet it was rather remarkable."—When New-Year's day came, he preached, and to the surprise of the congregation, took the same text. When seized about three weeks after, by the fever which caused his death, he adverted to the circumstance, and

remarked that he had been undesignedly led to preach, as it were, his own funeral sermon.

The relation between his mother and President Davies, the child of her prayers and of her vows, was so extraordinary, that any record that contains the name of the son ought to contain the name of the parent. When it is remembered that there was a perfect understanding between them in respect of the circumstances of his birth, their peculiar kind of interest and obedience towards each other, respectively, in addition to the most holy and beautiful affections of the ordinary natural relationship of parent and offspring, may be imagined. She was a remarkable mother and he was a remarkable child. She was also naturally a woman of a great strength of character, which had been still further fortified by the strength and intelligence of her piety. When the corpse of her son was laid in the coffin, she stood over it, in the presence of a number of friends, for some minutes, viewing it attentively, and then said—"There is the son of my prayers and my hopes—my only son—my only earthly supporter. But there is the will of God, and I am satisfied!"

The Inscription on the tomb-stone of President Davies, erected (as were all these sepulchral monuments of the Presidents) by the college, together with a translation of the same are as follows—

Sub Hoc Marmore sepulchrali  
Mortales Exuvie  
Reverendi perquam Viri,  
SAMUELIS DAVIES, A. M.  
Collegii Nov-Cæsariensis Præsidis,  
Futurum Domini Adventum præstolantur.  
Ne te, Viator, ut pauca de tanto  
Tamque dilecto Viro resciscas,  
Paulisper morari pigeat.  
Natus est in Comitatu de Newcastle, juxta Delaware,  
III Novembris, Anno Salutis reparatæ,  
MDCCXXIV. S. V.  
Sacris ibidem initiatus, XIX Februarii,  
MDCCXLVII,  
Tutelam pastorem Ecclesiæ  
In Comitatu de Hanover, Virginienſium, suscepit.  
Ibi per XI plus minus Annos,  
Ministri evangelici Laboribus  
Indefesse, et favente Numine, auspiciato perfunctus.  
Ad Munus Præsidiæ Collegii Nov-Cæsariensis gerendum  
Vocatus est, et inauguratus, XXVI Julii,  
MDCCCLIX, S. N.  
Sed, proh Rerum inane! intra Biennium, Febre correptus,  
Candidam Animam Cælo reddidit, IV Februarii, MDCCCLXI.  
Heu quam exiguum Vitæ Curriculum!  
Corpore fuit eximio; Gestu liberali, placido, augusto.  
Ingenii Nitore,  
Morum Integritate, Munificentia, Facilitate,  
Inter paucos illustris.



Rei literariæ peritus; Theologus promptus, perspicax.

In Rostris, per Eloquium blandum, mellitum,  
Vehemens simul, et perstringens, nulli secundus.  
Scriptor ornatus, sublimis, disertus.

Præsertim vero Pietate,  
Ardente in Deum Zelo et Religione spectandus.  
In tanti Viri, majora meriti,

Memoriam duraturam,  
Amici hoc quaecunbue monumentum  
Honoris ergo et Gratiudinis, posuere.

*Abi, Viator, ei æmulare.*

Beneath this marble

The mortal remains of a most venerable man,  
SAMUEL DAVIES A. M.,

President of the College of New Jersey,  
Await the coming of the Lord.

Refuse not, Stranger, to pause awhile  
And learn a few things of so beloved a Man.

He was born in the county of Newcastle, near the  
Delaware, on the 3d of Nov, in the year of  
our Redeemer, 1724, O. S.

He was ordained in the same place, 19th Feb. 1747.  
And undertook the pastoral charge of a congregation  
in the county of Hanover, Va.

He there performed indefatigably and by the blessing  
of God successfully the labors of a gospel minister,  
for about 11 years.

He was called to the presidential office of the College of  
New Jersey, and inaugurated, 26th of July, 1759, N. S.

But oh! the emptiness of things!

Within 2 years, he was seized with fever and surrendered  
his unspotted soul to God, on the 4th of Feb, 1762.

Alas! how short his race.

He was of a fine person, of a genteel, calm, and digni-  
fied carriage.

In splendor of genius, Integrity, Generosity, Courtesy,  
He was not surpassed.

He was versed in Literature, a ready and perspicacious  
Theologian—In the pulpit, by means of an eloquence,  
sweet, winning and at the same time vehement and con-  
trolling, he was second to none.

An elegant, lofty and copious writer.

But, in Piety, in ardent zeal for God, he was  
especially remarkable.

To the lasting memory of such a man who merits  
greater things, friends have erected this  
humble monument.

Go, Stranger, and emulate him.

In the interval, of Pres. Davies' decease and  
Finley's coming into the presidency, the  
management of the college was under the tu-  
tors; who were eminently capable men, es-  
pecially W. Halsey, the senior in that office.

*The period of College history embraced under the ad-  
ministration of President Finley is from the 1st  
June, 1761, to the 19th July, 1766.*

The regular meeting of the board, which  
should have been in May, after Pres. Davies'  
death, not having collected a quorum, express  
messengers were sent to the absent members;  
and on the first of June the trustees say—"It  
having pleased a sovereign God, since our last  
meeting to remove by death the late Reverend  
and ingenious Mr. Davies, President of the  
college, the trustees proceeded to the election

of a President; whereupon the Rev. Mr. Samuel Finley, of Nottingham in the Province of Pennsylvania, was unanimously chosen President of the college, in the room of the Rev. Mr. Davies; and the Rev. Mr. Finley, being informed of the above election, was pleased modestly to accept of the same—Whereupon, Mr. Treat, one of the members of this board, is desired to attend the next meeting of the Presbytery to which the Rev. Mr. Finley belongs, to request that he may be liberated from his present pastoral charge." President Finley had been for the last ten years a trustee of the college, and was on the ground at this time. On the 30th September following, he was duly inaugurated, qualified, and took his seat, in the absence of the provincial Governor, as chairman of the board. He had previously removed his family into the President's house, and entered on the active duties of his office, in July.

President Finley was an Irishman by birth, and he may almost be said to have been a christian by the same right. His uncommon, sincere and determined godliness begins to be apparent in his earliest words. He was one of a family of seven sons, who all partook, more or less, of the same character; at the age of six years he made up his mind voluntarily to become a minister of the gospel, and from that time was distinguished for the closeness of his application—his uncommon accuracy and proficiency in acquiring knowledge—and the immovable honesty of his moral and religious principles. His parents were poor—he came to this country in the 19th year of his age—made opportunities for prosecuting the study of theology—and was ordained to the office of the Ministry, by the Presbytery of New-Brunswick, on the 13th October, 1742. The first part of his ministry was employed in long and fatiguing itinerations, and the records of several of the churches which he visited contain eminent memorials of his diligence, fidelity and success. I should suppose, as far as an opinion may be drawn from the scanty materials at hand, that he was a gifted one, of that class of men, who, with the most substantial abilities, under the additional enlightenment and vigor of a pure religion, and without the occasional departures which more shining geniuses are apt sometimes to be betrayed into, had come into a settled belief of what is at all times and in all circumstances the more excellent way—and who with a strength of philanthropy equal to

their strength of faith determining to inculcate that doctrine of virtue upon the minds of their fellow men, have been gifted with a robustness of bodily constitution of the kind necessary to enable them to labour out their benevolent intentions. President Finley was a coadjutor with Tennent, Whitfield and others, in the great revivals of these days, and his labors were remarkably successful at Darfield, Greenwich and Cape May, in this State. He was a man of small stature, and of a round and ruddy countenance. In the pulpit he was always solemn, sententious and sensible—and sometimes glowing with fervor. He was remarkable for sweetness of temper, politeness and generosity.

During his residence at Nottingham he instituted an academy, which acquired great reputation, and attracted students from distant parts. He was justly famed as a most accurate scholar, and had those true qualifications of a literary instructor, which probably he could only have brought with him from the aristocracy of the old world, and which even before his time had in these new colonies given way to less essential notions on the subject.

Under his care the College flourished and acquired additional reputation, his own fame was rendered more extensive; it elicited the attention and correspondence of the most eminent men in Britain, and in the year 1763 his character as a divine and scholar procured for him through the interposition of his friends in Scotland without his knowledge at the time, the Degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Glasgow.

Unremitted attention to the duties of his station very sensibly affected Doctor Finley's health and procured a fixed obstruction in his liver which put a period to his life on the 17th day of July, 1766, in the 51st year of his age.

He died at Philadelphia, whither he had gone for the purpose of obtaining medical advice. His body was borne to the grave, in accordance with his dying request, by eight members of the senior class. Perhaps between no governor or instructor and those under their care, was there ever a feeling of more amiable interest and regard than in the case of President Finley and his scholars. The heat of the day on which his funeral took place, was so great that the body could not be brought to Princeton, as had been directed, but was interred in the burying ground of the Second Presbyterian church of Philadelphia, next to

the grave of the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, his once intimate friend and fellow laborer.

But the incidents of President Finley's life, admirable as they were, seem to have been all swallowed up in the view of the remarkable circumstances of his holy death. That account is so wonderful, so voluminous and so sacred, that as the whole is necessarily and reluctantly excluded from the present narrative, none of it can be extracted. A more rational and glorious death-scene was never transacted on the earth, since the days of the Patriarchs. It had all the philosophy of Socrates, and in its measure, it had all the pious reality and fervor of Paul.

At a meeting of the board on the 29th Sept. 1762; his Excellency Governor Harden was pleased to attend for the first time, and was accordingly qualified by taking the oaths of the Charter. After his decease, Governor FRANKLIN was qualified on the 28th September, 1763.

The pecuniary condition of the college during President Finley's time, although indifferent still, was more promising than it had ever been. The salaries of the officers had been increased. That of the President, had been advanced from 200 to 400 pounds per annum, with the usual perquisites of the office, and the privilege of gratuitous education for his sons, a privilege that was given to all the presidents. This increase of the college funds was mainly owing to the use of three lotteries, already spoken of, which had been enacted for it by the legislatures of Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and finally of its own State. Some extracts, from the history of this institution, which President Finley wrote in the latter part of his life, will now be more interesting than any other account could be.

"Though this institution has succeeded beyond the expectation of its warmest friends, notwithstanding the severe shocks it received, by the death of *three* Presidents, in so quick succession; and its unsettled state, till the chair was filled; yet it still labors under several deficiencies, which nothing but the beneficent hand of charity can relieve. With mathematical instruments, and an apparatus for experiments in Natural Philosophy, it is but very indifferently furnished. The library wants many of the most approved modern writers. It would be also of eminent service had it revenues ample enough to support professors in some of the distinct branches of liter-



ature; who might each make a figure in his own province, could his studies and instructions be confined to his peculiar department. A professor of divinity, especially, for the theological students would be of singular utility. At present there are three tutors, besides the President. To these the college funds, can as yet, afford but scanty livings; the tutors particularly, unless they assume a vow of celibacy, are unable to continue in their offices for life. Hence it happens, that when a young gentleman has, by study and experience, thoroughly qualified himself for the employment, he often resigns it; and the trustees are then obliged to elect another, perhaps not equally fit for it.

The fund, until within about a year past, hath not much exceeded £1300. But from a lottery which was generously set on foot by a number of gentlemen in Philadelphia, in favor of the institution, it was increased to nearly £2800, the net produce of the same, after necessary charges, and losses which usually happen, besides what was disbursed to pay urgent debts, being about £1500. Exclusive of the annual support of officers, the expenses from other quarters are not inconsiderable; nay do yearly increase, as the number of students increases.

Indeed from the countenance of the General Assembly of this Province, in passing an Act for a lottery of £3000 for the benefit of this college, some good addition will probably be made to its revenues. But the returns have not been made—much greater losses, than might have been reasonably expected, have accrued therein. So that the managers have reason to think that on the close of their books the clear profits will not much exceed £2200. Such an accession can only enable the trustees to make some addition, perhaps, to the annual allowances of the college officers; though not such as will be sufficient to retain them for life, in the character of professors, much less to maintain a greater number. Not long since, a very generous legacy was ordered in the will of the late Colonel Alford of Charlestown, in Massachusetts Bay: The sum designed for this college, is not yet precisely ascertained, that being left to the discretion of his executors: It is presumed, however, from good intelligence, that the appropriation here will not be less in value than £500 sterling.

Thus is exhibited a faithful account of the

origin and present state of the college of New-Jersey: A College originally designed for the promotion of the general interests of christianity, as well as the cultivation of human science.

Upon the whole, it is presumed it must appear manifest upon reflection, to every serious observer, that providence hath, in a peculiar manner superintended the affairs of this nursery, from its foundation to the present time. And indeed, it is esteemed by its directors their highest honor and happiness, that the Almighty hath vouchsafed so remarkably to countenance and succeed the undertaking, and thereby to encourage their humble expectations of his continued benedictions. To the singular favor of heaven on the means of instruction here used, it must be gratefully ascribed, that many youth, who have come to Nassau-Hall for education, without any just sense of the obligations either of natural or revealed religion, have been here effectually reformed, become men of solid and rational piety, and now appear upon the stage of action, employing their talents to the honor of the Supreme Bestower, in promoting the good of mankind. Hence the managers of this seminary are emboldened to hope, that while the original design of this establishment is steadily pursued, the same indulgent providence which hath hitherto supported it, amidst the reproaches of envy, and the opposition of malice, will raise up benefactors to supply its deficiencies, and succeed their disinterested endeavours, to train up our youth in the paths of piety and erudition, for the future service of their country in any civil or ecclesiastical employments."

The history, from which the above extracts are taken, contains a very entertaining account of the general order and government of the college and of the particular habits and customs of the society. It used to be common for the President to go into the dining hall, and eat with the students. They always seated themselves according to rank and seniority. There were about a hundred collegial students at this time. The boys of the grammar school, in number about fifty, boarded, mostly, in the college, and ate in the dining room at a table by themselves.

The whole matter of form and precedence, was strictly attended to in President Finley's time, and although it is not possible to resume such regulations now, it is certainly a question

whether a great deal has not been lost in the decay of them. The custom, for instance of an uniform dress certainly possesses some most important advantages, in the government of a college. But especially, in these days, would it not be well for gentlemen to consider whether, at least, in abandoning the use of the *gown*, they may not have lost much more in the matter of that kind of influence, ideal or not, which a uniform robe of office gives to the individuals of an official representation, in rendering more pertinent and dignified their official unity, then they have gained, on the point of personal convenience? A point that in a college of all other society, ought always to be sacrificed to whatever is true decorum of any kind.

In the absence of Dr. Finley at Philadelphia during the time that preceded his death, the college was placed under the supervision of Mr. W. Tennent.

The law requiring the students all to come into the college building to board, except in case of ill health, certified by a physician, was here passed.

A donation of one hundred pounds sterling was made to the trustees, by Mr. John Williamson, of Hanover, Virginia, for the use of the college in supporting a divinity professor. This is the first sum mentioned in the records as having been appropriated for the purpose of founding a professorship of Theology. The President of the college, till the establishment of the Theological Seminary in this place, had commonly the conducting of the theological studies of such graduates as chose to pursue these studies at college. A professor of theology, however, the Rev. John Blair, was appointed, about a year after the date of this donation and continued in office till the accession of President Witherspoon; at which time Mr. Blair resigned, and the professorship was formally conferred on Dr. Witherspoon in connexion with the Presidency.

An English School was established in the college by Dr. Finley, in obedience to an order of the board. But it was soon after ordered to be taken away from the college building.

A piece of ground was given to the trustees of the Presbyterian congregation in this place, for the use of that congregation in erecting a church. The building was erected in 1762-63, the trustees lent the congregation £700, which was afterwards repaid. The inside of the church was destroyed at the same time the in-

terior of the college was, by the soldiers of the British army in the revolution. It was entirely consumed, except the walls, by a fire which took place in 1813; It was rebuilt at the united expense of the congregation and the college; the college retained an exclusive right to the church, &c., at the time of commencement, and some others; and also one half of the gallery for the use of the students on the Sabbath. This rebuilt edifice was entirely destroyed by another fire, a few years since; on the site of which, in a crosswise direction, the present chaste house has been erected. The college used to perform all public exercises of commencement &c., in the chapel. It retains the same rights to the use of the present church, as it did to the previous buildings, as far as they are here expressed.

It was ordered that the Honorable Mr. Justice Smith the Rev. Messrs. De Ronde and Rogers, be a committee for drawing up an address to his Majesty, on his late gracious condescension to these colonies in the repeal of the stamp Act. This address was presented by Mr. Stockton. On his return he made the following report:—"Mr. Stockton acquainted the board that the papers which had been transmitted to him, while in England, by order of the trustees, came safe to his hands. That being introduced by one of the king's ministers, he had the honor, of presenting to his majesty the address of the trustees, on occasion of the repeal of the American Stamp Act, which was very graciously received."

The degrees of the year President Finley died were conferred by the Rev. Mr. Spencer. The customary graduation-fees, were voted to Tutor Halsey, in token of his faithful services.

Mr. Halsey held the office of Tutor longer than any other individual. He was one of the best scholars that was ever educated in the institution. He was afterwards for a number of years, a trustee of the college.

It may be well, to notice, that about this time, some particular precautionary measures were instituted to guard the college building against fire. For if a fire should now acquire head-way in these buildings, which, together with what they contain are infinitely more valuable at present than they ever were before, it certainly is not likely that any human, mechanical, interposition should save them from utter destruction. The chances of fire in these buildings are also more probable than for-



merly.

In the year 1762 another general revival of religion took place in the college. It began in the Freshman Class. The Rev. John Woodhull D. D. of Monmouth, deceased, who was a member of that class at the time, says "It was a pretty large class, containing between 25 and 30 members. Almost as soon as the session commenced, this class met, once in the week, for prayer. One of the members became deeply impressed; and this affected the whole Class. The other classes, and the whole college, soon became much impressed. Every class became a praying society; and the whole college met once a week for prayer. There was, likewise, a private select society. Societies (for prayer) were also held by the students, in the town and in the country. I suppose there was not one that belonged to the class that was not affected more or less. There were two members of the Senior Class who were considered as opposers of the good work, at first. Yet both these persons were afterwards preachers of the gospel. The work continued about one year." About one half of the whole number of students in college, then a little over a hundred, were believed to have been converted.

The Cenotaph to the memory of Dr. Finley, in the burial ground of this town, is inscribed as follows :

Memoriæ Sacrum  
Reverendi Samuelis Finley, S. T. D.  
Collegii Neo-Cæsariensis  
Præsidis.  
Armachæ in Hibernia natus, A. D. MDCCXXV.  
In Americam migravit, Anno MDCCXXXIV.  
Sacris ordinibus initiatus est, Anno MDCCXLIII,  
apud Novum Brunsvicum  
Neo-Cæsariensium.  
Ecclesiæ Nottinghami, Pennsylvaniensium,  
Munus pastorale suscepit, XIVo Kal. Jul. MDCCXLIV;  
Ibique, Academiæ celeberrimæ  
diu præfuit.  
Designatus Præses Collegii Neo-Cæsariensis,  
Officium inivit, id. Jul. MDCCCLI.  
Tandem, dilectus, veneratus,  
Omnibus fleudus,  
Morti occubuit Philadelphia,  
XVo Kal. Sextilis, A. D. MDCCCLVI.  
Artibus literisque excultus,  
Præ cæteris præcipue enituit  
Rerum divinarum scientia.  
Studio divinæ gloriæ flagrans,  
summis opibus  
Ad veram Religionem promovendam,  
et in concionibus,  
et in sermone familiari,  
Operam semper navabat.  
Patientia, modestia, mansuetudo

miranda,  
animo moribusque enituerunt.  
Ob charitatem, observantiam, vigilantiam,  
erga juvenes fidei suæ mandatos  
fuit  
insignissimus :  
Moribus ingenuis, pietate sincera,  
Vixit omnibus dilectus,  
Moriens triumphavit.

This Inscription may be turned into English thus :

Sacred to the Memory  
of the Rev. SAMUEL FINLEY, S. T. D.  
President of the College of New Jersey.  
He was born at Armagh, Ireland.

A. D. 1715.

Emigrated to America, in the year 1734.

He was ordained in 1743 at New Brunswick, N. J.  
He undertook the pastoral charge of a church at Nottingham,  
Pa., 19th May 1744.

And was for a long time master of a celebrated Academy  
in that place.

Being appointed President of the College of New Jersey, he  
entered upon the office 15th July, 1761.

At last, beloved, respected and lamented, by all he died at  
Philadelphia the 18th of July, 1766.

Skilled in Literature and the Arts, he outshone others,  
especially in knowledge of divine things.  
Burning with zeal for the glory of God.

He employed all his resources, in promoting Religion, by  
conversation as well as preaching.  
Patience, Modesty and uncommon gentleness, shone in his  
disposition and manners.

He was remarkable for his kindness, attachment and watch-  
fulness towards the youths entrusted to him.

Frank in his manners and sincere in his Piety he lived be-  
loved by all, and died triumphant.

There is an interesting document among the archives of the college, in the hand writing of President Finley, being a production of the nature of a Programm and Syllabus of the public exercises of commencement, as they were conducted under his administration. It was deposited by Dr. Ebenezer Finley decd., of Charlestown, S. C.

The principal part of this curious paper, will now be quoted. It will close the history of the college down to the time of President Finley's decease. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that each exercise announced by the President, must be supposed to have been performed, before the attention of the audience was called to that which immediately follows.

THE  
PROCESS OF THE  
PUBLIC COMMENCEMENT  
IN  
NASSAU-HALL ;  
SEPTEMBER,  
A. D. 1764.

## THE PROCESS, &amp;c.

The trustees being at the President's house, the candidates standing at the door, two and two, upon his saying—

Progredimini Juvenes,

They walk—

1. The Bachelor candidates.
2. The Masters.
3. The Tutors, and any Ministers present.
4. The Trustees.
5. The President—the Governor at his right hand, All seated—Prayer succeeds.

Præses (capite tecto)—

“Auditores docti ac benevoli Juvenes primam Lauream ambientes, cupiunt vos per Oratorem salutare; quod illis a vobis concessum fidunt.”

Ascendat Orator saluatorius.

\* \* \* \* \*

Distribuantur Theses.

\* \* \*

Quoniam, docti Anditores, accurata disputandi Ratio ad verum a falso discernendum plurimum valet, Juvenes artibus initiati, parvula quædam eorum in ea Specimina, vobis jam sunt exhibitura.

Prima Disputatio, syllogistice tractanda—

Thesis est,

Mentiri, ut vel Natio conservetur, haud fas est. Qui hanc Thesin probare atque defendere statuit, ascendat.

FOSTER.

Qui Thesin oppugnari judicavit, ascendat.

Primus Opponens—LAWRENCE.

Quoniam concederetur Sermonem ad felicitatem hominum provehendam constitutum fuisse, attamen non æque nobis constat quid semper ad eum finem conducit; sed magis credendum est Mendacium nunquam ad eum facere; dum Exemplum Virtutis omnibus prodesse potest.

2 dus Opponens—SMITH.

Determinatio.

Mentiri, quacunque de causa, ignobile et sua Natura pravum esse, res ipsa clamat, et ferme ab omnibus, præcipue Virtutem colentibus, conceditur. Quod si omnino fas esse possit, Deus comprobatur; et si ille possit probare, non est necessario verax; sed impossibile est eum mentiri, ergo et mendacium probare.

Nec ratio Veritatis ab hominum Felicitate, sed Dei Rectitudine pendet; et quoniam sibi semper constare necesse est, non potest non esse rectus. Ergo falsum necessario improbat, ut ejus naturæ oppositum; et vetat Malum facere, ut quidvis Bonum inde sequatur, etiam ut Natio conservetur.

\* \* \* \* \*

The following is an English forensic Dispute, which for Reasons often mentioned, is introduced, viz—it entertains the English part of the Audience; tends to the cultivation of our native Language, and has been agreeable on former occasions; which I presume are sufficient apologies for continuing the custom.

The Thesis is,

Somnia non sunt universaliter inania, et nihil significantia.

In English—

All dreams are not useless and insignificant.

Who undertakes the defence of this position?—

MILLER.

Whoever has any objections against what has been offered, let him speak—TREDWELL.

Who judges it fit to answer these objections?—McCRERY.

Determination.

Although I see no necessity of accounting for all dreams from the Agency of other Spirits, any more than to interest them in the Reveries of the mind, when lost in mere imaginary Scenes while we are awake, without reflecting that they are not realities: Yet that foreign Spirits have access to ours, as well when we are asleep as awake, is inconsistent with no Principle of Reason. And if some dreams cannot otherwise be accounted for, than by having recourse to foreign Spirits, we must then admit their agency; since there can be no effect without a cause. And though it must be granted that our own Spirits at the same time think, yet there's no Inconsistency in supposing that other Spirits gave Occasion to their thinking of some Subjects rather than others, as is the Case in conversing together when we are awake.

What has been Matter of fact is certainly still possible: And we know that in some Cases infinite Wisdom chose to employ Angels to communicate divine Instructions in Dreams; which establishes the general Doctrine. And Experience assures us that Impressions made on these Occasions, are very deep and lively; and as has been observed, those very Dreams that come from fullness of Business, or other Causes mentioned, show us the Temper of our Minds, and in that View are useful and significant.

\* \* \* \* \*

To unbend the Mind by an agreeable Variety, as far as may consist with the Exercises of the Day, an English intermediate Oration is next to be delivered.

Ascendat Orator intermedius.

\* \* \* \* \*

Thesis proxime discutienda, modo pene forensi, est, Lux Rationis sola, Incitamenta ad Virtutem satis efficacia, non præbet.

Qui hanc Thesin primus defendere statuit, procedat—WOODHULL.

Qui primus opponit Thesi, procedat.

LAWRENCE.

LEAKE.

Qui Objectiones refellere, et Thesin firmare suscipit, procedat.

Determinatio.

Recte notatum fuit, quod Naturam Peccati probe scire necessarium est, ad Virtutem rite æstimandum. Peccato enim ignoto, odisse illud nequimus; et sine Peccati odio, nulla datur Virtus. Et quoniam clarum est, quod homines, Luce Naturæ sola freti, ignorant quid sit virtus, et quales ejus Consequentiae in Seculo futuro; nesciverunt Deum, veræ Virtutis Ex-



emplar, nec non Amorem et Satisfactionem Domini Salvatoris, quæ sola sunt Incitamenta ad Virtutem idonea; Thesis Valet.

The next Thesis is,

Nullam veram Virtutem habet, qui omnes non habet.

In English—

He has not one true virtue, who has not every one. Who undertakes to defend this position?—TUTTLE. If any think fit to oppose it, let him appear—HAZARD.

Who judges he can confute these arguments let him speak—CLAGGET.

Determination.

That the Thesis is true, appears demonstrable both from the Simplicity of the Soul and the Nature of Virtue. As the Soul cannot be divided into any Parts, if one Vice is prevalent it possesses the Soul entirely, and the whole principle of action is vitiated. And as Virtue is a Disposition of Mind to whatever is morally good, and Goodness must be uniform, and of a piece, it can no more be dismembered than the Soul therefore whatever mixture of vice there may be with virtue, one of them must necessarily predominate; foreseeing that they are perfectly opposite to each other, it is as impossible for a Person to be under the governing power of both at once, as for Fire and Water to subsist together, without the one's being extinguished, or the other evaporated.

Virtue consists in the Love of God and man, nor can it be separated: the Pretence is not tolerable, that a Hater of his Brother should be a Lover of God. Now 'tis certain that one cannot love and hate the same thing at the same Time, and in the same Respect. There must then be such a necessary Connexion of all virtues, that one cannot possibly be without all: consequently a single virtue, where any vice prevails, is but a counterfeit.

Exercitia quæ restant ad tertiam Horam P. M. postponuntur.

The remaining exercises of the Day begin at three o'clock afternoon.

\* \* \* \* \*

Orator hujus Classis valedictorius ascendat.

Exercitia, quæ a Candidatis secundi Gradus præstanda sunt, jam sequuntur.

Thesis disputanda hæc est, scil:

Jephtha Filiam non immolavit.

Ascendat hujus Quaestionis Respondens—MR. KERR.

Ascendat primus qui hanc Thesin veram esse negat.

Determinatio.

Fatendum est, quod in hac Quaestione docti in Partes abeunt. Sed ut Theseos Veritas appareat, considerandum est quod fuit Jephthæ Votum—"Qui—vel, quodcunque—exierit e foribus Domus meae, in Occursum meum, erit Domini, *et, vel*, offeram illud in Holocaustum." q. d. vel aptum erit ad Sacrificium, vel non: si prius, erit in Holocaustum; si non, erit Domino sacrum, devotum. Hebraeae Voces non aliter necessario significant; nam *Vau* saepe disjunctive sumitur, ut multis exemplis patet. Adde, quod Deus detestatus est humanas Victimæ, et improbat;

quod cum Sacerdotes saltem norunt, non verisimile est Jephtham eos in tanta causa non consuluisse. Nec parvum habet momentum, Filiam ejus Spatium defendendi, non Mortem sed Virginitatem, petiisse; cum enim dicitur Jephtha fecisse quod voverat, sequitur, et non cognoverat Virum.

Descendant Candidati Honores hujus Collegii amibentes.

AD CURATORES.

Juvenes, quos coram vobis, Curatores honorandi ac reverendi, jam sisto, publico Examini, secundum hujus Academiae Leges, subjecti, habiti fuerunt omnino digni qui Honoribus academiæ exornarentur: Vobis igitur comprobantibus, illos ad Gradum peti-tum, toto Animo admittam.

Eadem Auctoritate regia, virum Davidem McGregor, Novangliae, de Religione et Literis bene meritum, ad secundum in Artibus Gradum, Honoris causa, admitto.

Eadem Auctoritate, Reverendum, Nathan Kerr, Davidem Caldwell, Concionatorem Evangelii, necessario absentem: Reverendum Johannem Strain, hujus Collegii alumnos; ad secundum in Artibus Gradum admitto.

Hoc Anno etiam,

Jacobus Thompson, A. M. Thomas Henderson, A. M. Johannes Lefferty, A. M.

*Forma constituendi A. B.*

Auctoritate, regio Diplomate mihi collata, pro More Academicarum in Anglia, vos ad primum in artibus Gradum admitto; vobisque hunc Librum trado, una cum Potestate in Artibus praelegendi et docendi, quotiescunque ad hoc munus evocati fueritis: Cujus, hoc Instrumentum, Sigillo nostri Collegii ratum, testimonium sit.

*Forma constituendi A. M.*

Auctoritate, regio Diplomate mihi collata, pro More Academicarum in Anglia, vos ad secundum in Artibus Gradum admitto; vobisque hunc Librum trado, una cum potestate in Artibus praelegendi, publiceque profitendi ac docendi, quotiescunque ad hoc Munus evocati fueritis: cujus, hoc Instrumentum, Sigillo nostri Collegii ratum, Testimonium sit.

In constituendo A. M. honorarios, inseratur hæc Clausula, scil—"ad secundum in Artibus Gradum, Honoris Causa, admitto.

Orator magistralis valedictorius.

Rev. McGregor.

Rev. Nathan Kerr.

Dialogue.

Prayer.

After the death of Dr. Finley, the college remained under the government of Mr. Tennent, for most of the time, till the commencement of '67, after which, the Rev. John Blair, who had been appointed to a professorship in divinity and morality, as has already been said, having arrived, was "qualified" for the office of the Vice Presidency at the same time that

he was inducted into his professorship. He, therefore, acted as president until the accession of Doctor Witherspoon, on the 17th August, 1768.

To understand certain circumstances, connected with the history of the college at the time of Doctor Witherspoon's election to the presidency, and by which it seemed to have been a good deal agitated; it will be necessary to know the following facts, which must be related very concisely, although they form an important part of the internal history of the institution, and contain an instructive lesson.

It has been stated that this college grew, immediately, out of the exertions of certain gentlemen who adhered to the Synod of New York, after the disunion between that Synod and the Synod of Philadelphia; and that the schism which severed those ecclesiastical bodies, had been so far compromised, as to result in an apparent reunion. But it appears, that some characters in the Philadelphia portion, after having attempted something in the way of obloquy and reproach, now became ambitious of having a certain pre-eminence themselves, in an institution which they had previously found they could not destroy. At least such a phase their transactions in relation to this matter, appear to assume at this time, and so they were probably esteemed then. However, a very respectable delegation, was sent by those gentlemen, to the trustees, the substance of whose offer of amicable union in respect of the conducting the college was, that if the trustees would give them the Institution and its reputation, they would in turn present the college with a President and faculty, and all at their own expense. The college had by this time acquired character and figure to have attracted attention not only in America, but across the waters. The whole negotiation was conducted by means of several conferences between different delegations from those persons who were the applicants, and on the part of the trustees, by Messrs. Woodruff, Tennent, Spencer and Rodgers, and Messrs. Stockton, Ogden and Shippen, who were the committees of the board at different times. It must be confessed that much excellent diplomacy was shown on both sides. But the whole affair was happily a failure, because such elements as was proposed to be brought together, could never have harmonized, and between the two the college must have inevitably dissolved. The trustees, however, to

conciliate matters, did proceed to institute and elect a faculty, such as the applicants proposed. But they were not satisfied, and their committee departed.

In the mean time Dr. Witherspoon, whom the trustees had previously invited to the presidency, and who had once refused; having been able to arrange certain family affairs which in the first instance had prevented his acceptance, signified his willingness to come. He, accordingly, arrived in the month of August, 1768, and at a special meeting of the board called on the seventeenth of that month, he was inaugurated.

Previously, however, to the hypothetical creation of a faculty, spoken of above, and after the first reply of Dr. Witherspoon, declining the office of the presidency "the trustees proceeded to the choice of a president to succeed to the late reverend and worthy Dr. Finley, deceased. After the maturest deliberation, the Rev. Mr. Samuel Blair, of Boston, in New-England, was duly elected President of this college, and also Professor of Rhetorick and Metaphysics."

"At a meeting of the trustees, 9th December, 1767. The Clerk certified that, pursuant to an order to him directed and signed by six of the trustees of this college, he had issued regular and timely notifications of the present meeting, to all the members.

Mr. Smith communicated a letter from the Rev. Mr. Samuel Blair, to the Honorable William Smith, Esq., President of the trustees at their last meeting, wherein the said Mr. Blair declines accepting the Presidentship of this college, to which he was chosen; and the said office was accordingly declared to be vacant." It was then, that Dr. Witherspoon was re-elected. The Rev. Samuel Blair, afterwards the Rev. Doctor Blair, who is recorded in this minute as having "declined accepting the Presidentship of the college," was the son of the Rev. Samuel Blair of Fog's Manor, heretofore mentioned, and the nephew of the Rev. John Blair, Vice-President and Professor of Divinity. He was graduated at Nassau-Hall in 1760; and afterwards served, for about a year, as tutor in the institution. He was at this time, settled in the ministry, in the town of Boston, as colleague with the venerable Doctor Joseph Sewall.

Mr. Blair must have been under thirty years of age when he was chosen president. But at that time a youth of higher promise was prob-



ably not to be found in the American church. As soon as Mr. Blair had ascertained that a re-election of Dr. Witherspoon would insure his service and influence in favor of the college, a voluntary and prompt tender of the resignation here recorded, prevented the embarrassment in which the board of trustees might otherwise have been involved. Dr. Witherspoon was very gratefully affected by this act of generosity in his behalf, on the part of Mr. Blair, and often spoke of it with admiration.

It appears that there were two sorts of objections in the case of Dr. Witherspoon's accepting the invitation to the presidency, the one being the difficulties existing in his private affairs, which have been spoken of, and which were soon obviated, when the other sources of his hesitancy in the matter had been explained and removed, through the interposition of Mr. Stockton, then in Europe.—This latter class of objections arose from false and prejudicial representations concerning the college, which had been communicated to him through the uncandid interference of the opposition party, whose efforts to obtain some control in the management of the institution, it was thought best to take some notice of above.

The coming of Doctor Witherspoon to the head of the college, had an effect to revive the Institution throughout. The repeated shocks which it had received in its progress; in the death of five presidents so rapidly succeeding each other, the consequent want of stability and order in its internal government and conduct; the repeated attacks of contumelious and envious partisan foes, who doubtless took it upon themselves, with the usual presumption and dogmatism of censorious persons, to enter behind the designs of these singularly mournful providences, and pronounce upon them, in accordance with the interpretation eagerly embraced by the reproachful and inhuman nature of their own feelings in reference to them; and the exhausted and hopeless condition of the treasury, always an ephemeral department in the Establishment, that rose and sunk only in obedience to the temporary will of the public; the combination of these distresses and rebukes, appear very nearly to have stranded the Institution about this time, and to have left it to dismember and gap and decay, upon a lukewarm region, where hope grew listless, and exertion began to

droop and sicken, in view of the apparent impossibility of any relief being able to retrieve it out of the extremity into which an unusual complication of calamities had driven it. A financial committee, reporting several years after this period, remark concerning the state of the college about the time when Doctor Witherspoon arrived, that "but for the timely assistance which was received in consequence of his coming, and the renewed energy and harmony, thereby infused into the councils and action of the Board, the Institution must have inevitably become bankrupt." And it is out of respect to the call of that same committee, advising gratitude, by the friends and alumni of the college towards the persons whose benefactions saved it from the destruction which was threatened, and anticipated by some, that a more particular notice will be taken of the measures adopted by the trustees, and voluntarily instituted by the friends of the college, at the present crisis, than might otherwise appear necessary. It is to be remembered, in conceiving of this College, that it has arrived at its present state of prosperity and acquired the reputation of its past honorable distinction, entirely by the force of its own merits, whatever they may be, or may have been esteemed. It is in every good sense of the word, a voluntary establishment; and having received from the state no other endowment than that of the corporate existence bestowed in its charter, it will be found, that by means of some influence or other, this noble concern has steadily moved on in the midst of poverty and fire and robbery, and has acquired, not only a reputation, but a character of its own, which is peculiarly grand, and of a kind that the hoariest antiquity, the most magnificent buildings, or the most extensive instrumental facilities, could never have procured for it.

It is proper for those who admire the strength and stability and order of this college to look back and contemplate the periods of agitation and gloom through the progress of which it has come to its present state. And, although it may not be well distinctly to call up such scores, yet it ought to be recollected that during the early portions of its history the institution had not only to contend against poverty, but that, being considered by an opposition party as the Acropolis of an antagonist, it was for a long time a target and centre against which reproaches were incessantly thrown at the entire party, who were said to have pos-

session of it. But, supposing it indeed to have been a partisan citadel in the first place, it has well turned out by this time, that that which used to be only a munition of warfare has come to be a strong rock of truth and education, and that Nassau-Hall if ever a fort, is now at least an Academy of science and, not an outward temple indeed, but yet a temple of Religion, and Beauty and Art.

A portion of a life of Doctor Witherspoon, which is found in the "Biography of the Signers of the Declaration" relating to the present period of the college history, shows so intimate and correct a knowledge of that history that it may be properly quoted in this place.

"One of the first benefits which the college received from the appointment of its new president, was the augmentation of its funds, which, from a variety of causes, were then in a low and declining condition. At that period, it had never enjoyed any resources from the state; but was entirely dependent on private liberality and zeal. The reputation of Dr. Witherspoon excited fresh generosity in the public, and his personal exertions, which extended from Massachusetts to Virginia, rapidly improved its finances, and placed them in a flourishing condition. It was, indeed, afterwards prostrated by the revolutionary war, which almost annihilated its resources; but the friends of learning must recollect, with gratitude, how much that institution owed to his enterprise and talents. The principal advantages, however, which it derived, were from his literature; his mode of superintendency; his example as a happy model of good writing; and the tone and taste which he gave to the literary pursuits of the college.

"The piety, erudition, knowledge of the world, and deep insight into human nature, possessed by Dr. Witherspoon, qualified him, in an eminent degree, for the station which he now filled; and no man was more prompt and popular as presiding officer of a literary institution. In addition to the benefits derived from his great reputation, by the accession of students, and the formation of funds, he endeavored to establish the system of education in the college, upon the most extensive and respectable basis that its situation and finances would permit. The course of instruction had formerly been too limited; and its metaphysics and philosophy were strongly tinged with the dry and uninteresting forms of the schools. This, however, was not to be imputed

as a defect, to those excellent men, who had previously presided over the institution; it rather arose from the recent origin of the country, the imperfection of its social condition, and the state of its literature. Mathematical science received, during his presidency, an extension that was before unknown in the college. He introduced into philosophy, all the most liberal and modern improvements of Europe; and extended the philosophical course, so as to embrace the general principles of policy and public law. He incorporated with it, sound and rational metaphysics. He laid the foundation of a course of history; and the principles of taste, and the rules of good writing, were as happily explained by him, as they were exemplified in his manner. It is believed that he was the first man who taught, in America, the substance of those doctrines of the philosophy of the mind, which Dr. Reid afterwards developed with so much success. He caused an important revolution in the system of education, whereby literary inquiries and improvements became more liberal, more extensive, and more profound. An admirable faculty for governing, and exciting the emulation of the youth committed to his care, contributed to the success of his various efforts to perfect the course of instruction. The great number of men of eminent talents, in the different liberal professions, who received from him the elements of their education, is the best evidence of his services in the college. Under his auspices, a large proportion of the clergy of the Presbyterian church was formed; and to his instructions, America owed many of her most distinguished patriots and legislators.—He introduced a system of public voluntary competitions among the students, in the various branches of study pursued in the college. One of these consisted in translating any given phrase of English into Latin, on the spot, and without previous preparation; and in an extemporaneous exercise in writing Latin, for the completion of which a short specified time of a few minutes only were allowed: the competition in Greek was only in reading, translating, and analysing the language. Thus, faithfully and perseveringly, he continued to guide the course of education in the institution over which he presided, until the revolutionary war suspended his functions, and dispersed the college."

From the meeting of the trustees called on the 9th December, 1767, which, as has been



said, was summoned for the purpose of receiving Mr. Blair's declination, and of promoting Dr. Witherspoon's re-election to the presidency, until the breaking out of the war of the Revolution, a multitude of important measures and resolutions were passed by the Board; from which a selection, as adequate as may be compatible with the limits of the present compilation, will now be made. And in most instances, the selection will be transferred, in *haec verba* from the college records: because it has been found that the state of facts at present sought to be narrated, can be thereby accomplished in a more interesting, conspicuous and condensed manner that can be done by altering the language of the records and making use of the periphrasis of verbiage necessary to connect the facts in a consecutive phraseology of narrative. The laws, and motions quoted will explain themselves, and the state of things indicated by them may easily be inferred. These records, too, are frequently of the authorship of some of the profoundest and most accomplished legal gentlemen that our country has produced, who were members of the board, and are always of the authorship of some individual of a most venerable body of men, of whom there was not one at the time, whose character and influence have not become a part of the public history of our country, and especially of the Revolution, then at hand.

The first attention of the Board of Trustees was directed to the improvement of the funds of the college, and to the better arrangements of the whole financial and fiscal department, which had been suffered to fall into a gross state of disorder and confusion.

By a report made at the commencement meeting of the board, held in 1767, it appears that the sum total in bonds, notes and other securities, in the possession of the college was 2815 pounds *proc.* money, and that but 950 pounds, or thereabouts, was under actual improvement at interest.

At the same time subscriptions were sent out to obtain support for the establishment of certain professorships.

The powers and authority of the respective and collective officers of this faculty are ascertained and established, and the President gives a casting vote.

"Mr. Rodgers, pursuant to order, laid before the board a draught of a letter to the Reverend Synod of New York and Philadelphia, which

was read and approved. Ordered that the same be transcribed and signed by the Clerk, and that Mr. Rodgers do present it at the next session of the said synod."

This application to the synod was successful. A contribution was ordered to be made, in all the congregations under the care of the Synod, for the support of a Professor of Divinity in the College, to be annually applied by a vote of the Board.

Mr. Wm. Tennent produced draughts of sundry laws for the better regulation and order of the college." Among other things the President and officers are employed to examine the classes, in addition to the periodical examinations previously existing, at any time during the year according to their discretion; and to degrade such students as should be found deficient.

"And whereas it hath been customary in times past for some of the orators at the Public Examinations, and Commencements, held in this college, to be elected by the members of the class to which they belong; which custom hath been found from frequent experience to be injurious to the good order and government of the said college, particularly as it enervates the influence of the College officers, and tends to promote a spirit of faction and party among the students. It is therefore ordered that in all future times all the public orators, whether Latin or English, both at the Examinations and public Commencements, be nominated and appointed solely by the President and officers of the college, or a major part of them; and that the said custom of electing orators by the class be from henceforth totally abolished."

From the same laws it appears that the rooms, to some extent, were all furnished in common, by the trustees, the inmates are prohibited from altering the furniture, or exchanging it, the rooms are numbered, and the articles in each chamber are imprinted with a corresponding mark, a law of "fixtures" is established, and an "Inspector of rooms" is appointed.

A new edition of the "Newark Grammar," with emendations, was ordered, to be prepared at the expense of the board.—The work was committed to Messrs. Caldwell, Reeve and Pemberton, masters of the Grammar School at Elizabeth Town. This grammar was of the Latin language, originally prepared by President Burr, and was the standard for a long

time in the college and throughout the country.

"Voted, that the practice of sending freshmen upon errands, or employing them as servitors, in any manner whatsoever, be from henceforward totally discontinued.

#### THE COLLEGE UNDER PRESIDENT WITHERSPOON'S ADMINISTRATION.

On the 17th August, 1768, as has been already cursorily stated, "The Rev. Dr. John Witherspoon, having arrived from North Britain, to preside at the head of this institution, was duly qualified as the charter directs; and having taken the oaths of office as one of the trustees and President of this college took his seat accordingly."

Dr. Witherspoon, before coming to this country, made a tour in behalf of the college, from Paisley to London and thence to Holland. "The president having informed the board that he hath brought over a considerable number of books for the use of the college amounting to about 300 volumes, which were the gifts of sundry friends abroad, and that he soon expects another considerable benefaction in books, the trustees do most thankfully accept the same, and request that the President will be pleased by letter in their name to express to the several benefactors their grateful acknowledgments for these useful donations."

"Whereas an order made by the trustees in the year 1751 respecting the introduction of Uniform Habits for the more decent and reputable appearance of the officers and students of this college, hath never been fully carried into execution for want of a sufficient penalty to enforce the same; Be it now ordained, that from and after the next Commencement vacation, in this present year 1768, all the officers and students of Nassau-Hall shall appear uniformly habited in proper *Collegiate Black Gowns*, and square caps, to be made in the manner and form of those now used in some of our neighbouring colleges, and properly uniform, excepting any proper distinctions that may be devised by the officers of college, to distinguish the habits of the President, Professors or Tutors, from those of the students, and it is hereby strictly ordained that no resident student or under graduate subject to the rules and orders of college, shall at any time after the said next Commencement vacation appear either at Church, in the College Hall at prayers, or at any other collegiate exercises, or at any time abroad, without being clothed

in their proper collegiate habits"—and for every violation of any of the provisions of this law a severe penalty is imposed.

The above law was probably drawn up by Dr. Witherspoon. It was rigidly enforced and obeyed; the benefit of it was felt; and, moreover, the want of that benefit is felt and is apparent now, in every collegiate society in our country. That "the state of modern society has come to be so very rational, as not only to have acquired an independence of all kinds of merely significant outward forms, such as, for instance, the use of the gown either as a robe of office generally, or as a sign of fellowship in a literary corporation, but even to have rendered such things ridiculous," is a consideration of no weight at all in opposition to the real propriety of them, whatever weight it may have as an argument against the possibility of resuming them in the present state of things. Because, if it be true; if modern society has rendered nugatory and awkward the use and meaning of these kinds of instrumentalities, then modern society, just so far forth as thereby indicated, is itself vulgarity and falsehood. If there is any truth in the Imagination of man, and any certainty in the principles and effects of Art—if it be true that a great portion of the ideas, and of the refinement produced by them, which a civilized man has, in distinction from those of a savage, may be described as those which are created and conveyed by means of that whole panoply of circumstantial and figurative expressions and combinations, that make up civilized life, and which however purely fictitious they may be as constructive signs merely, the things indicated and promoted by them are not so—then it is certain that the circumstance of the gown ought to be one of the very last means to be forgotten in the conduct and government of a college. If there is nothing real and effectual in a college gown, then there is nothing real in the official dignity and "circumstance" of a college corporation; for they are both of them equally fictitious creations, and are both, in some respects, precisely of the same nature. The gown is an important part of the means of education, and ought never to have been abandoned. The law, above quoted, was for a long time enforced to the letter. After Dr. Witherspoon's death, its rather extreme requisitions, such as that of wearing the dress upon all occasions, at recitations, in the town, and every where out of rooms, were



probably somewhat remitted—but it is only within a few years that students have been accustomed to appear in prayer-hall and chapel shining in their secular dresses. But he that looks at the departures from decency and good order in the American colleges and court-rooms of the present day, can only have the satisfaction that arises from lamenting over them; for the case is desperate and there is no remedy.

From a resolution passed at the anniversary meeting of the Board in September, 1768, it appears that a part of the business of the Divinity professor, used to be, to preach to the students. "Professor Blair, in consequence of his accepting an invitation from the people of Maidenhead and Kingston to preach to them on the sabbath, and in consideration of the trustees relinquishing his services as a preacher to the trustees" foregoes a certain portion of his salary.

April 5th 1769. Mr. Blair resigns his professorship, and the trustees accept, on account of the insufficiency of funds for the support of his office. The duties of this professorship are then transferred to the office of the Presidency.

"Resolved for the same reason namely the want of funds, that a former vote of this board respecting a Faculty to be established in this college be wholly vacated and annulled."

"Dr. Witherspoon acquainting the Board that from accounts received at Boston, near 1000 pounds proc. hath been subscribed and part of the same remitted for the use of this college, the board request, that he would be pleased, by letters in their name, to return the thanks of the trustees of the college, to the several benefactors, who have so generously assisted the institution.

The President moved that an extract of a letter to him from William Phillips Esq., of Boston, might be inserted in the minutes; the same was ordered to be inserted accordingly; and is in the words following:—My two brothers have subscribed £100 each (Boston lawful) which with my subscription added, makes £300 or 1000 dollars, which mention, as we are desirous it may be applied to some particular use hereafter, provided the funds of the college may admit thereof, and you advise to such appropriation. In that case it may be enlarged." It was enlarged, and paid in to the amount of £500.

"The Board considering the intimation in the above extract contained, desired the Presi-

dent of the college to write to the said Mr. Phillips and refer the appropriation of the money subscribed by himself and brothers, to such use and purposes as he or they shall think fit to direct.

The Board being informed that the Rev. Mr. Caldwell of Elizabethtown had taken a journey to the Eastern part of Long Island, and had set on foot a subscription there, as well as at Elizabethtown, for the use of this college, Mr. Smith is desired to give the said Mr. Caldwell the thanks of the trustees for his services and to request his endeavors to have the money collected when payable, and sent to him, and that he remit the same when received to the Treasurer of college, taking his receipt.

The Board having been informed that some considerable benefactions might probably be obtained for this college upon personal application among the friends of learning and religion in South Carolina, and Dr. Rogers having, on request, signified his willingness to undertake the services, provided his congregation would acquiesce in his absence from them for so long a time; the trustees thought proper to appoint him and desired that if possible he would proceed to Charleston early in the next fall; and in the mean time they will endeavor by application to the synod of New York and Philadelphia to obtain supplies for his church during his absence, and furnish him with letters and credentials for the said service."

Subscriptions seem to have been set on foot at this time, by the friends of the college in every part of the country. The new impulse given to the institution by the coming and by the presence of Dr. Witherspoon is very manifest.

In addition to the measures taken on this subject under the immediate direction and authority of the board of trustees, as above shown, an agent was commissioned a year after this time, to make a tour throughout the southern provinces generally, for the purpose of soliciting subscriptions.

"The Board having received encouragement that some considerable benefactions might be obtained in the southern provinces for the use of this college upon proper personal application by some agent to be appointed and sent thither by this board, the Rev. Mr. Caldwell, now a member of the same, being accordingly requested to undertake their service, was pleased to signify his acquiescence therein;



and also his intention to proceed onward directly from Williamsburgh in Virginia, to which place he is now on his journey pursuant to an appointment of the synod of New York and Philadelphia. It is therefore resolved that a commission be made out, with the seal of this college thereunto affixed and signed by the Clerk in the name of the corporation, constituting and appointing the said Mr. Caldwell their agent and attorney for the said purpose of soliciting and receiving donations and subscriptions, for the benefit of this institution, in Maryland, Virginia, the two Carolinas, and Georgia, with the amplest power for the better execution of the same. And it is also agreed that the said Mr. Caldwell's expenses on this service be defrayed out of the college funds, as also any expenses his church may be put to, on account of supplying his pulpit during his absence."

These commissions were all of them more or less successful. But the exact amount of the respective returns into the college funds, cannot now be well ascertained, in consequence of the disorderly state into which the financial department had fallen, and in consequence of the loss of the records of a very important meeting of the board held in April, 1775, at which the state and management of the Treasury was the principal subject of examination and discussion, and, which, if reclaimed, would probably furnish all the data necessary to ascertain the precise amount and proportions of the returns of the above mentioned commissions. "The treasurer's accounts being called for, it appeared very necessary that the state of the college funds should be more carefully examined and adjusted than could be done by the board during the present session; they do therefore appoint Messrs. Smith, Livingston, Macwhorter, Bondinot and Caldwell, or any three of them a committee to meet at Princeton on the 15th of August next at 5 o'clock P. M., and as often afterwards as they may judge necessary, to examine, adjust and state the college funds and draw up a plan for the conduct of the Treasury." As has been said the minutes of the meeting of April, 1775, at which this committee presented their report, are missing. It fortunately happened, however, that a similar committee reporting in the year 1793, say that they accidentally met with some of the draughts made out by the aforesaid committee, from which it appears that from the year 1769 to the year 1774, the

period covering that of the returns under consideration, the gross sum of £7769 pounds had been received into the Treasury. And the committee reporting the same say that "without that seasonable and providential aid your committee, are of opinion that this corporation must ere this time have become totally bankrupt. For in 1769 before any of the donations (making up that sum) were received, the clear stock was, (including the charitable appropriation) about £3000, of which about £1800 only was upon interest, and now the whole stock but little exceeds £6000. The warmest returns of thankfulness are therefore due to the benefactors of this institution, as well as to those by whose spirited exertions those great benefactions have been promoted. And your committee in a very particular manner beg leave to recommend to every member of this board in future a constant attention to the state of the funds."

September 27th, 1769. The trustees meet and attend the commencement—at which twenty are graduated, among whom was Governor Henry, of Maryland. John Hancock, of Boston, was admitted *ad eundem*.

The trustees, for the first time, pursuant to the powers granted them in his majesty's royal charter, confer the degree of L. L. D. It was on John Dickinson and Joseph Galloway, Esquires, of Philadelphia, gentlemen of eminence in the literary world, and in their own peculiar professions.

It has been remarked, that the effect of Dr. Witherspoon's coming into the presidency of the College, was to encourage the hearts and animate the exertions of the friends of the institution, in its behalf, throughout the country.

"The Board being informed that several of the friends of the College, have in different parts of the country set on foot subscriptions for benefactions to increase the the funds, do approve of, and gratefully acknowledge the measures taken by them for that purpose, and recommend the further encouragement and promotion of the like subscriptions."

The manner in which this interest of the public in favor of the College, just after the darkest and most hopeless period of its early pecuniary history, reacted upon the boards, is now more and more apparent, in giving precision and harmony to their councils and decisive energy to their own exertions. The society is waking out of the cold lethargy of

a sorrowful winter, and a festive commotion and activity are manifest, in promoting and preparing for a time of greater hope.

It was said in the commencement of the present compilation of the college history, that the reason why the Institution was not established in New Brunswick, was that the inhabitants of that place would not accede to the proposition of the Board made to them for that purpose, and that the people of Princeton being willing to enter into the conditions proposed by the trustees, the college was accordingly fixed in this place. The nature of that stipulation, as it respects the party of the people, will appear in the following report. "The committee appointed to settle the accounts of payments supposed to be made on the bond given by Thomas Leonard, John Stockton, and John Horner, Esquires, to the trustees of this college, in confirmation of founding the college at Princeton, brought in their report as follows.

"Princeton, April 13th, 1769. Sederunt as a committee of the College of New Jersey, the Revds. Mr. Kirkpatrick and Witherspoon with powers to settle the account of the bond given by Thomas Leonard, John Stockton and John Horner, Esqs., to the said trustees for the sum of One Thousand pounds, dated the 26th December, 1752, and having examined the amounts of payments produced and compared them with the bond and endorsements, they do report—that the said bond to the trustees ought to be discharged and delivered up to the representatives of the said obligors."

"Whereas it has been represented by the president, that some reparations have become necessary, about the college, Messrs. Witherspoon, Stockton and Berrian, are appointed a committee to examine into the state of the buildings, and give such directions about repairs as they may judge necessary for their better preservation."

At the annual meeting of the board, following the date under review, this "Committee for repairs of the College Buildings, report, that having consulted with several of the members of this board, and other friends of the College, since the last meeting, they were informed and advised that it was become expedient and necessary and would be agreeable to the public, that the court-yard of the college should be handsomely and well enclosed, with a substantial brick wall and paled fence on a

stone foundation, in front, which would add to the beauty, convenience and reputation of the college; that they have accordingly ventured upon the work (though not expressly empowered in their appointment, to make new additions) confiding in the approbation of the board. That bringing the lower tier of rooms into repute, and rendering them habitable and useful, and the annual rents of the same being thereby consequently equal perhaps to the whole cost of the improvement, were the motives with the said committee in directing the earth to be taken down near two feet in front, and the whole to be perfectly levelled away to the front wall. The board having considered the above reasons offered by the committee, were pleased to confirm their proceedings therein, though it might be deemed exceeding the powers vested in them (which all committees are to be cautious of exceeding.)—And this board do now empower the said committee to proceed upon the said work on the plan begun, and they are requested to exert themselves in soliciting the assistance of the inhabitants of the town, in order to ease as much as possible the expense with which this work will be necessarily attended."

The improvement about the lower tier of rooms, spoken of above, evidently refers to the sunk esplanade which now surrounds the building. How it is possible that these chambers, sepulchral enough at best, could ever have been habitable without some such contrivance it is not clear to perceive. After this improvement, however, they were occupied as occasion called for them, until the erection of the East college building. It is probable, that the rooms underneath the chapel, and the entire basement of the central crossing of the old building, were the ones which used to be occupied by the steward, &c. And it does not require a very long memory for the sophomores of much later days to turn a doubtful glance to the times when they used to be immured for recitation in those caverns. A graduate even of '38 or '39, as he beholds now the beautiful, airy and appropriate arrangements of the present reformed recitation rooms, may claim the honor of a very hoary and paternal antiquity in reference to them, as compared with what he used to be accustomed to. Up to that time the present Sophomore recitation-room, which used to be the Junior, was in all respects, as to light and altitude of ceiling, precisely analogous with the



corresponding room on the same floor of the building. The seats, however, were more substantial, being of the hardest oak, with rail-tops, attempted to be made thick and strong enough to resist *inscriptions*, which they did not however by any means accomplish; and uncouth and rough enough to be anything but comfortable. Indeed the rails and benches of that room ought to have been preserved. The seats were graduated *upwards* from the door, so that the person entering, and proceeding towards the back row, instead of coming into an increasing space, the ceiling at that point came into such intimate proximity with the floor that a very uncomfortable sensation used to be felt in the top of the head and an unpleasant compression all over. The present delightful conversion of that room has been made by lowering the floor, clearing the windows, and reversing the order of the graduation of the seats; and between the present and the former style and finish of the seats, the stage and the pulpit, no comparison can be made at all.

The same use may be made of the old philosophical hall, to explain the difference, or rather the superiority, of the present one, for they cannot be compared, but contrasted. Down to the same period of general reformation of the recitation rooms, in 1839-40, the philosophical-hall was rather more than half the size of the present one, with the same style of finish as that of the Junior room just described, without any good means of ventilation, the windows obscured by the bulwarks of the gallery abutting against them, and the atmosphere during lecture, so oppressive, at least just before the time of alteration spoken of, from the crowded numbers in it, and the heat of the sun on the roof of it, that those members of the senior classes who attended at that time will remember it. The museum was also fitted up with a gallery for chemical lectures, and the two apartments which used to be occupied by the Literary Societies, were turned into recitation rooms, with the same beautiful and convenient style of adaptation and finish. The Senior recitation-room proper, used to be the one immediately over the present Sophomore, now thrown into the Library, and was by all means the best and most comfortable for its purpose in the whole establishment. But it was not equal in respect of its arrangement and style to any of those now existing.

The brick wall and paling, spoken of in the

above report, along the front, was on the site of the present iron railing.

The most extensive improvements, however, that have ever at any one period been made about the college grounds, not referring to the alteration of the entire appearances of things by the erection of the new buildings, is that effected a few years ago by this iron railing, the levelling and laying out of the campus &c. These great improvements were all made about the time of the general reformation of the recitation rooms referred to. But the proper time to speak particularly of them will be in the order of their date. An accurate and authentic account of the public rooms of the old college building and the uses to which they were anciently put, will be wrought in with a general description of the present buildings and premises, to be given at the close of this compilation.

At the meeting of the board, under consideration, the annual meeting of 1769, Mr. Piriam "having resigned his tutorship in this college, the trustees proceeded to the choice of another in his stead, when Mr. Jeremiah Halsey was unanimously elected as Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, and it was resolved that a salary of £125 be allowed the said Mr. Halsey in case of his acceptance of said office."

This is the first decisive attempt that was made by the board for the establishment of a faculty in science. It was not successful just at this time, but was carried into operation two years after. Mr. Halsey did not think proper to accept the call. He had been senior tutor for some time previous, and was at this time, or very soon after, a trustee in the college, and a settled pastor. The offer of the professorship by which he was elected to succeed the senior tutor, did not perhaps appear to indicate the honor of the office so much as it referred to the additional duties of it. Mr. Houston, master of the grammar school, was next chosen to fill the place of Mr. Piriam, and accepting, was qualified. In the year 1771, it will be seen by the following quotation that Mr. Houston was promoted to a bona fide professorship in science, and that his was therefore the first scientific professorship established in the college.

"Pursuant to a plan heretofore concerted, for the establishment of professorships in the various branches of learning in this college, as soon as the funds should be found to admit of



their support; the trustees now resumed the consideration of that measure; and conceiving it to be expedient that a mathematical professor, as most immediately requisite, be now chosen in place of one of the tutors, proceeded to the election of a Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, when William Ch. Houston, M.A. now senior tutor in the college, was declared to be unanimously elected to that office. It was then resolved, that for the present, the annual salary of the said Mr. Houston, as Professor of mathematics and Natural Philosophy, be the sum of £125 *proc.*, and that this board will hereafter provide for his better support, as their funds will admit, and the future situation of the said professor shall reasonably require; as it is intended by this board that the said professorship shall be permanent in this college for the future."

"Sept. 29th, 8 o'clock A. M. met according to adjournment.

"The Board taking into consideration the great want of a Philosophical apparatus for the use of the students in this college, in Natural Philosophy, of which it has been long destitute; it was now resolved that Dr. Witherspoon, Mr. Brian, Dr. Shippen, Dr. Redman, Dr. Harris, Mr. Beattie and Mr. Caldwell, or any three of them be a committee to consult and determine upon such and so many of the instruments belonging to an apparatus, as may be judged by them to be the most necessary and immediately wanted. And the said committee are empowered to send their orders to England for the same as soon as they conveniently can; provided the amount of the cost exceed not the sum of £250 sterling."

September 26th, 1770. "The trustees this day attended the annual commencement at the church in Princeton, when they were pleased to direct the admission of the following (22) candidates to their Bachelor's Degree."

This is the first formal mention of the commencement being held in the church, though as that building was completed a few years previous to this time, it could not have been the first occasion.

"Mr. Caldwell reported, that pursuant to the request and appointment of this board, at their meeting in September last, and the powers vested in him, he proceeded immediately after that meeting on his journey into the Southern Colonies, where he spent the last

winter in soliciting subscriptions and benefactions for the use of the college. That he met with very good success in that business, and hath, in consequence, transmitted several considerable sums of money into the Treasury, but that he is as yet unprepared to ascertain the precise amount of the whole, though he is confident it will, when paid in, amount at least to the sum of £1000 *proc.* money, clear of all charges.

The Board received this report with great satisfaction, and returned Mr. Caldwell their thanks for his generous and assiduous services, in prosecution of his commission.

Mr. Caldwell having represented, that the subscriptions which he obtained and which he expected would be made in Georgia, could not be paid in, but in the produce of the country; that it would therefore be absolutely necessary to charter some vessel to proceed thither, in the month of January next, in order to receive and take in the said produce. The Board therefore having considered the same, thought proper to request the said Mr. Caldwell to write immediately to his correspondents there informing them that a small vessel will be chartered and sent to Georgia, in the beginning of January next, and requesting that the several benefactors may have the effects to be received, ready to be sent on board the said vessel, that so no expense from unnecessary delays may accrue. And Mr. George Bryan (with the assistance of Mr. Jonathan Smith, merchant of Philadelphia,) is appointed to charter such vessel to proceed to Georgia, consigned to such person or persons and observing such directions, as Mr. Caldwell shall advise."

"Whereas by a law passed December, 1767, for ascertaining the power and authority of the respective officers of the college, some misconstructions have been made of the words following, viz:—"The particular officer whether President or Tutors, who shall have the immediate superintendency and instruction of a particular class, shall have the sole authority, of directing the times and manner of their recitations and other collegiate exercises."—And it hath thence been conceived that a tutor hath the sole power of ordering and directing the methods to be pursued in the instruction of youth, belonging to his particular class, though contrary to the opinion and sentiments of the president of the college:—The trustees therefore, do declare that the Presi-

dent of this college, for the time being, is invested with the sole direction, as to the methods of education to be pursued in this seminary—and that the words above recited shall not be so construed as to exclude him from the sole direction, whenever he may think proper to interfere in the conduct and regulation of the modes of instruction; he being chiefly answerable to the world, for the particular steps which are taken, in educating the pupils trained up in this college. And the trustees are rather induced to make the above explanation and amendment of the said law for that when it was enacted, the president elect resided in Great Britain, and it was uncertain how long a time might elapse before he should actually take the chair: but now he hath actually taken upon himself the charge of the college, and the trustees have been so fully satisfied, by experience, of his great abilities in the management of the institution committed to his care, and with high pleasure have seen his indefatigable labors and success in raising the reputation of this college; they are clearly of opinion, that all the authority above declared to be annexed by the said law to the office of President of the college, is highly proper to be put into the hands of the Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, the now president.”

“Resolved, that Dr. Witherspoon and Mr. Stockton be a committee to collect and examine into all the writings, instruments of conveyance, records and papers, relative to the affairs of this college and corporation, to see that all deeds be properly acknowledged and recorded, to take an inventory and list of all those writings, and to provide a sufficient and strong box or chest, in which the whole may be securely deposited and safely preserved, and that the same be, and remain, in the custody of the president of this college for the time being.”

The funds of the college were not invested at this time, but were let out upon loan, generally personal security; the trustees finding that they lost money thereby—passed a law requiring the mortgage of real estate as security for the use of all sums over £200.

A legacy of fifty pounds was handed in to the trustees by the heirs of Robert Walker, Esq., of Pennsylvania, to be applied to the education of pious youth, in the college, for the ministry.

Prof. Houston is appointed Librarian and

keeper of the philosophical apparatus.

“Resolved, that Mr. Caldwell be desired in the name of this board to transmit letters to the several presbyteries, belonging to the synod of New York and Philadelphia, who have set forward subscriptions in their respective bounds for the benefit of this college, praying their care and diligence to collect in or take proper securities, for the moneys; and that they will be pleased to direct that exact accounts of the same be brought to the next meeting of the synod, and Dr. Witherspoon, Dr. Rodgers, Mr. Treat and Mr. Bryan are appointed a committee to settle those accounts with the several presbyteries.”

This resolution relates to the subscriptions, spoken of before, which had been ordered by synod. The amount of the returns cannot be well inserted in this place. The report of the Committee appointed in 1774 to revise the treasury, the loss of which was recovered by a committee of finance appointed in 1793, contains something on this matter; and the report of that secondary committee is so important and so much allied with the report of the original committee, that it will be most conducive to a perspicuous understanding of the state of the financial department of the college, from the commencement of its history till the year '93, to approach that report in the order of its date, when it will be quoted entire. It will be sufficient to remark, in this place, that a part of the amount raised by the above subscriptions was appropriated by the synod, under such restrictions, as to involve the college in some embarrassment as to the propriety of their disposing of it in accordance with a just construction of the powers of their charter.

“Dr. Witherspoon is desired at his leisure to return the thanks of this board by letter to all such gentlemen, as he may know or be well informed, have been most active and zealous in promoting the late subscriptions for the benefit of the college fund.”

“It having been represented to this board that there appears to be some prospect of obtaining a grant of lands in this province for the benefit of this institution, by preferring a petition for that purpose to the Council of proprietors of East Jersey; Resolved, therefore, that Dr. Witherspoon, Messrs. Stockton and Smith be a committee to meet and consult together on the proper measures to be pursued in making the said application, and if upon



consultation and advice, they shall deem the measure worthy of prosecution, they are hereby empowered to draw up a petition for the grant of 1000 acres of land, for the use of this institution in name and behalf of the trustees, and to prefer the same at the next meeting of the council of proprietors at Amboy." The committee very soon after report, that they did *not* "deem the measure worthy of prosecution."

September 25th 1771. Twelve bachelors were admitted to their degree. Madison graduated this year.

"It having been represented, that disputes have not infrequently arisen, among the students of college, respecting claims of preference in choice of rooms, to the breach of that harmony and order which ought ever to subsist among the members of this society; in order therefore to remove every occasion of such difference, it is now ordered by this board, that every student hereafter shall, and may, remain in quiet and undisturbed possession of the chamber, which, at his first coming to reside at college, he shall be directed to occupy: nor shall he be liable to be dispossessed of the same by any graduate or under graduate, on pretence of any claim of choice from superiority of standing: nor shall any exchanges, or removes be hereafter made, unless by voluntary agreements with the assent of the president or tutors, or unless by their express order for other reasons of convenience than claims from superiority of standing; Provided, always, that if any student shall absent himself without license, for the space of one week after the expiration of the spring or fall vacations, or shall absent himself, without leave, for one day during the course of the summer or winter terms, then, and in such cases, any students, with the consent of the president and tutors first obtained, may enter into, and take possession of, the chamber so deserted, and the student so absenting himself shall forfeit all his right and title to the same."

Further extracts from the records of this period, cannot be introduced into this compilation. The minutes of the meetings held during the first few years succeeding Dr. Witherspoon's arrival, are very full and always important. It has been difficult in the case of the extracts already given, to decide what to take and what to reject. The minutes themselves, during this period, are, for the most part, of the authorship of one of the greatest

lawyers our country has produced, and a full transcription of them would be the best condensed history of the college that could be written, of the period which they cover.

In March 1772. It was represented to the board, that there was a fair prospect of collecting a considerable sum for the use of the college, in the West Indies; and such reasons were offered as convinced them that it was highly proper to send a well qualified agent to those parts for that purpose. Dr. Witherspoon was, accordingly, requested to undertake the commission. He acquiesced and determined to go, but afterwards recommended his son, James Witherspoon, who was about making a journey to Barbadoes on his own account, to the board for the appointment which had been made to himself. The trustees acceded to the substitution, and in addition to that gentleman they thought proper to commission a more express agent, the Rev. Charles Beattie, a member of the board. Messrs. Beattie and Witherspoon were, accordingly, duly commissioned, and taking proper credentials, embarked on their agency. But the undertaking was most lamentably frustrated, by the death of Mr. Beattie, soon after his arrival, and the approaching troubles of the Revolution, prevented the resumption of it afterwards.

The board received intelligence of Mr. Beattie's death in September, and record, "It appearing that Mr. Edward Ireland, in Barbadoes, had showed particular kindness to Mr. Beattie, ordered, that W. P. Smith, Esq. write a letter of thanks to him in the name of the board."

The gentlemen of this commission to the West Indies, were furnished by Dr. Witherspoon, with an address to the inhabitants of those parts, which is now interesting in itself, on account of its authorship, and also contains an account of the college during the period of its history under review. Some extracts from that address, relating to the course of instruction in the college, at the time, will be given in this place. The entire article is well worth perusal, and may be found in the 4th vol. of the Philadelphia edition of his works.

"I will now proceed to speak a little of the Constitution and Advantages of the College of New Jersey in particular.

"About twenty-four years ago, several gentlemen and ministers in this province, by the friendship and patronage of Jonathan Belcher, Esq. then Governor, obtained a very ample



royal charter, incorporating them under the title of Trustees of the College of New Jersey ; and giving them the same privileges and powers that are given to the 'two English Universities, or any other University or 'College in Great Britain.' They, although only possessed of a naked charter, without any public encouragement, immediately began the instruction ; and very soon after, by their own activity and zeal, and the benevolence of others who had the highest opinion of their integrity, raised a noble building, called Nassau Hall at Princeton, New Jersey. This they chose to do, though it wasted their capital, as their great intention was to make effectual provision, not only for the careful instruction, but for the regular government of the youth. There all the scholars are lodged, and also boarded, except when they have express license to board out, in the president's house or elsewhere.

The regular course of instruction is in four classes, exactly after the manner and bearing the names of the classes in the English universities : Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior. In the first year, they read Latin and Greek, with the Roman and Grecian antiquities, and rhetoric. In the second, continuing the study of the languages, they learn a complete system of geography, with the use of the globes, the first principles of philosophy, and the elements of mathematical knowledge. The third, though the languages are not wholly omitted, is chiefly employed in mathematics and natural philosophy. And the senior year is employed in reading the higher classics, proceeding in the mathematics and natural philosophy, and going through a course of moral philosophy. In addition to these, the President gives lectures to the juniors and seniors, which consequently every student hears twice over in his course, first upon chronology and history, and afterwards upon composition and criticism. He has also taught the French languages last winter, and it will continue to be taught to those who desire to learn it.

"During the whole course of their studies, the three younger classes, two every evening formerly, and now three, because of their increased number, pronounce an oration on a stage erected for that purpose in the hall, immediately after prayers ; that they may learn, by early habit, presence of mind and proper pronunciation and gesture in public speaking. This excellent practice, which has been kept

up almost from the first foundation of the College, has had the most admirable effects. The senior scholars, every five or six weeks, pronounce orations of their own composition, to which all persons of any note in the neighborhood are invited or admitted.

"The College is now furnished with all the most important helps to instruction. The library contains a very large collection of valuable book. The lessons of astronomy are given upon the orrery, lately invented and constructed by David Rittenhouse, Esq., which is reckoned by the best judges the most excellent in its kind of any ever yet produced ; and when what is commissioned and now upon its way is added to what the College already possesses, the apparatus for the mathematics and natural philosophy will be equal if not superior to any on the continent.

"As we have never yet been obliged to omit or alter it for want of scholars, there is a fixed annual Commencement on the last Wednesday of September, when, after a variety of public exercises, always attended by a vast concourse of the politest company, from the different parts of this province and the cities of New York and Philadelphia, the students whose senior year is expiring, are admitted to the degree of Bachelors of Arts ; the Bachelors of three years standing, to the degrees of Masters ; and such other higher degrees granted as are either regularly claimed, or the Trustees think fit to bestow upon those who have distinguished themselves by their literary productions, or their appearances in public life.

"On the day preceding the Commencement last year, there was (and it will be continued every year hereafter) a public exhibition, and voluntary contention for prizes, open for every member of College. These were first, second, and third prizes, on each of the following subjects. 1. Reading the English language with propriety and grace, and being able to answer all questions on its orthography and grammar. 2. Reading the Latin and Greek languages in the same manner, with particular attention to true quantity. 3. Speaking Latin. 4. Latin versions. 5. Pronouncing English orations. The preference was determined by ballot, and all present permitted to vote, who were graduates of this or any other College."

"As to the government of the college, no correction by stripes is permitted. Such as cannot be governed by reason and the principles of honor and shame, are reckoned unfit

for residence in a college. The collegiate censures are, 1. Private admonition by the president, professor, or tutor. 2. Before the faculty. 3. Before the whole class to which the offender belongs. 4. And the last and highest, before all the members of the college assembled in the hall. And, to preserve the weight and dignity of these censures, it has been an established practice that the last or highest censure, viz. public admonition, shall never be repeated upon the same person. If it has been thought necessary to inflict it upon any one, and if this does not preserve him from falling into such gross irregularities a second time, it is understood that expulsion is immediately to follow.

"Through the narrowness of the funds, the government and instruction has hitherto been carried on by a president and three tutors. At last commencement, the trustees chose a professor of mathematics; and intend, as their funds are raised, to have a greater number of professorships, and carry their plan to as great perfection as possible.

"The above relates wholly to what is properly the college; but there is also at the same place, established under the particular direction and patronage of the president, a grammar school, where boys are instructed in the Latin and Greek languages with the utmost care, and on the plan of the most approved teachers in Great-Britain. It is now so large as to have two masters for the languages, and one for writing and arithmetic; and as some are sent with a design only to learn the Latin, Greek, and French languages, arithmetic, geography, and the practical branches of the mathematics, without going through a full college course, such scholars are permitted to attend the instruction of the classes in whatever coincides with their plan. It is also now resolved, at the request of several gentlemen, to have an English master after next vacation, for teaching the English language regularly and grammatically, and for perfecting by English exercises those whose previous instruction may have been defective or erroneous."

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"This leads me to observe, that it ought to be no inconsiderable recommendation of this college to those at a distance, that it has the esteem and approbation of those who are nearest it and know it best. The number of under graduates, or proper members of college, is near four times that of any college on the con-

tinent to the southward of New-England, and probably greater than that of all the rest put together. This we are at liberty to affirm has in no degree arisen from pompous descriptions, or repeated recommendations in the public papers. We do not mean to blame the laudable attempts of others to do themselves justice. We have been often found fault with, and perhaps are to blame for neglect in this particular. It is only mentioned to give full force to the argument just now used, and the fact is certainly true. I do not remember that the name of the college of New-Jersey has been above once or twice mentioned in the newspapers for three years, except in a bare recital of the acts of the annual commencements. The present address arises from necessity, not choice; for had not a more private application been found impracticable, the press had probably never been employed."

September 30th, 1772. The trustees attend commencement; twenty-two candidates were admitted to the first degree, among whom is the name of Aaron Burr.

"The treasurer of the college is ordered on the first Saturday of every quarter-yearly month, at 10 o'clock of each of those days, to attend at the President's house, and exhibit for the inspection of the President, Mr. Stockton and Mr. Spencer, a committee of the board, all the bonds, notes, and other securities belonging to the corporation. And the committee are empowered to institute proceedings for the recovery of unsettled accounts." It seems that the board, not only had great difficulty in keeping the affairs of the treasury in good order, but that they had much trouble in collecting their debts.

"Teaching Hebrew in the college, being considered by the board of great importance, especially to those who intend to study divinity, Mr. Devens, one of the present Tutors in college, is appointed to instruct those in Hebrew, who offer themselves for that purpose. And although the board do not enjoin it upon all, as a part of college study necessary for a degree, yet they direct the president earnestly to recommend the knowledge of Hebrew, and to take such methods as he judges most convenient to engage the students to learn it as far as necessary.

"The honor of this college being greatly interested in the public exhibitions and performances of the young gentlemen at commencement; it is hereby ordered, that every



candidate for a degree, propose to the president the subject upon which he intends to write, and obtain his leave. And after he has composed the piece he intends to deliver, he shall show it to the president for his correction at least four weeks before the commencement. And no one of the candidates may leave the college after examination, till he has finished his commencement exercises, and had them corrected as aforesaid. And those who do not comply with this order shall not be allowed to appear upon the stage. Or if any shall presume to deliver there what he has not showed as before, the President is directed to stop him upon the delivery of such a sentence." And in the following year, "It was ordered, that in case any student shall omit or refuse to comply with the said order, instead of being only prohibited speaking in public, as might be understood by this regulation, he shall be denied a degree, or be liable to such other censure as the board may think proper. And if the class, or any part of them undertake to introduce anything, as part of the entertainment during the time of the public exercises at commencement without the desire or consent of the faculty, they shall be liable to censure, as aforesaid." These are evidently *ex post facto* laws.

"It appeared to the board highly expedient that a number of the trustees should attend the public examination of candidates for degrees, accordingly, it is ordered, that Messrs. Peartree Smith, Stockton, Tennent, Spencer, Livingston, McKnight, Read, Caldwell, Halsey, and McWhorter, do attend and direct the ensuing examination, the third Wednesday in August, and they or a majority of them, together with any other trustees attending the examination, shall report to the board, at their meeting previous to the commencement, whom they judge qualified for degrees."

Here we have the first regularly instituted examining committee of the trustees, an institution that has been continued to the present time. The first report of the examining committee, is as follows:

Sept. 28th, 1773.—"The committee appointed to attend the examination, report, That they met and continued the examination from seven o'clock in the morning till one o'clock next day, and agreed to recommend to the board twenty-eight of the class which was examined," among whom were Governors, Lee, of Virginia. Morgan Lewis, of New York, and Aaron Ogden, of New Jersey.

"Dr. Witherspoon, Mr. Spencer, and Mr. Boudinot, are appointed managers, to procure the public dinner, next commencement, and to give invitations to such strangers attending commencement, as they may judge proper." The year following, this "Committee appointed to provide a public dinner for the trustees and their friends, reported"—the cost. "Ordered, that for the future, there be no public dinners at the expense of this board."

The report of the Exam. Committee appointed this year for the ensuing examination, had discretionary power to prolong the same, as all succeeding committees had, and their report, which will be introduced under the present ante-date, shows the thoroughness with which those examinations were then, and thereafter conducted. "The committee appointed to attend the public examination of candidates for degrees, report, that they began the examination on Tuesday morning, August 16th, at 6 o'clock, and continued it till the following Thursday at noon, and did agree to recommend all the class to the board, as worthy of degrees, except two." The examinations were at this period published in the New York and Philadelphia papers.

The above extracts will show how the coming of Dr. Witherspoon to the presidency, had an effect to revive the hopes and animate the exertions of the friends of the college, until it was brought to a degree of prosperity that it had never known before. A reference to the Triennial catalogue during this period, will show a corresponding increase in the number of students. But a more fearful paroxysm in the progress of discipline, to which this institution seems from the first to have been fated, is now at hand. "The times that tried men's souls" are approaching, and no individual came in for a greater share of the trial than did Nassau-Hall.

#### *The College during the Revolution.*

The precise time at which the college was disbanded in consequence of the war of the Revolution does not appear. At the annual meeting held in September 1775, nothing unusual is manifest in the deliberations and action of the board; nothing from which one would suppose that they anticipated the sudden catastrophe of the storm that was brewing. They adjourned to the regular semi-annual meeting to have been held in April following. But by that time the affairs of the nation had



come to such a pass, that every one could forecast the manner in which the issue was to be tried. The war was inevitable, and it came. The trustees did not meet again in quorum till May, 1777. The students probably left the college immediately upon the arrival of the enemy in this part of the state, and on the 2d day of Jan. 1777, the enemy took possession of it. The main body of the British army were assembled at Princeton on the night of the first, being on their way to Trenton, and a brigade under Lieutenant-colonel Mawhood was ordered to quarter in the town and college. This brigade consisted of the 17th, 40th, and 55th regiments, with three troops of dragoons, all of them Hessians. They used the basement rooms of the building for stables. It is likely that the college, together with the church in town, were sufficient to quarter the whole brigade. Some historians say that these soldiers, being the vanguard of Cornwallis' army, had been quartered in town for several weeks previous to the battle of Princeton. By the night of the 2nd, Cornwallis had shut up Washington at Trenton, waiting only for the daylight of the 3d to annihilate his army, and close the war; as to all human appearance he would have done had Washington waited for the attack. If there ever was a crisis in the affairs of the Revolution, this was the moment; thirty minutes would have sufficed to bring the two armies into contact, and thirty more would have decided the combat. Cornwallis supposing the Americans were without retreat, addressed his officers on that night saying "the men had been under arms the whole day; they were languid and required rest; he had the enemy safe enough and could dispose of them the next morning; for these reasons he proposed that the troops should make fires, refresh themselves, and take repose." His officers acquiesced, except Sir William Erskine who exclaimed, "My Lord, if you trust these people to-night you will see nothing of them in the morning." In the morning Cornwallis hearing the firing at this place, inquired what it was, Erskine replied "My Lord, it is Washington at Princeton."

The retreat from Trenton was effected on the night of January 2d, 1777. It was conducted along the Quaker-Road. When the column had reached the skirt of the woods in which the Friends Meeting house stands, General Mercer led off a small detachment for the purpose of destroying the bridge which crosses

Stony-Brook by the old road. His object was to prevent pursuit from Trenton and to intercept fugitives from Princeton, that is of the regiments quartered there which he anticipated would be routed by the main column of Washington's army, and would naturally retreat towards Cornwallis. The present Turnpike was, of course, not in existence at the time. On his way to the bridge Mercer encountered the 17th regiment which had left the college, and was on march to Trenton.— This was early in the morning of the third, just after sun rise. The Battle of Princeton was contested, on the side of the enemy, entirely by this regiment. The scene of the battle was in the neighborhood of the place where Mercer's detachment first recognized the 17th. Both parties, upon the recognition, made for the summit of the declivity on the east side of the brook, and attained it in about equal time. The action commenced with a volley from Mercer's detachment, who were stationed in line diagonally across the present turnpike and exactly bisected by it, on the top of the hill. The particulars of that engagement, not having immediate connexion with the college, cannot be noticed any farther in this place. The main column of the American army was in the mean time moving in sight of the battle, on its way to Princeton. By the time the head of it had reached the further side of the ravine which crosses the turnpike just beyond the Seminary grounds, they deployed in consequence of the 40th and 55th Hessians, who attracted by the firing had left the college and formed on the opposite brow of the ravine. Their lines crossed the corner of the Seminary lot. Two regiments of Americans were ordered to attack. They advanced for that purpose, but before they had crossed the ravine the British turned about and precipitated themselves into the college building, the windows of which were immediately knocked out in preparation for a defence. The Americans expected a warm reception, but before they had approached to within a quarter of a mile of the building, the Hessians rushed out of the front and retreated to New Brunswick. Some balls were fired by a detachment of the American army, who brought up the field pieces, not knowing that the British had retreated. One of these balls struck the college at a point west of the chapel projection about opposite the region where the beams of the second floor enter the wall, and between the second and third

windows counting from the projection; the exact part which the ball struck was for a long time perfectly obvious. The place, weakening the spandrel between the arches of the windows, has since been filled in anew. Signs of that filling in are still apparent to those who have previously seen the shattered portion.—The ball rebounded, passing very near a mounted officer of St. Clair's brigade. Another entered one of the chapel windows and tore away a portrait of George II., from the frame which now contains the picture of Washington and the death of Mercer, in the chapel.—From this circumstance, which is purely authentic as will be seen further on, the portrait probably hung on the side of the room opposite that on which the present painting hangs.

When the troops assembled at Princeton, the absence of the General, who had been led away some distance in the pursuit of the fugitives—that is of the 17th regiment, with which the battle was fought and which was totally destroyed, excited strong emotions of alarm for his safety, which he soon relieved by his presence. They found in the town some shoes and blankets, which to the Americans at that time were of all things most acceptable. Some of the officers arrived soon enough to partake of a breakfast which a mess of the 40th regiment had compelled the steward of the college to prepare for them in the president's house, and at which they were in the act of sitting down, when they were interrupted by the firing at the battle.

Washington immediately led on his army towards Morristown; the sick and wounded were left in the college building, which was thence used as a hospital for six or eight months. The extent of the devastation effected by the soldiers on both sides upon the college premises can only be expressed by saying, that whatever about the building or the grounds was capable of being burnt and could be torn up, was destroyed. The season of the year when the building was occupied by soldiers was that of the intensest cold, and soldiers are apt to tear up things when they are in need of a fire. It is said that the Americans destroyed much more than the British; it is very likely they did so, for they had a much longer chance; but in the strife of a wanton and malicious destruction it is to be hoped that there are few beings who have capacities in that way equal to those of the horrid wretches who composed the Hessian regiments in the Jer-

seys. Between the two, however, whether for malice or for fuel the building was torn to pieces, stripped from roof to basement of every particle of wood work that could be removed, the floors were cut up, the fences were demolished very speedily, so that anywhere in the neighborhood of the college there was no such thing to be found. Worse than all this, however, the ornaments of the prayer hall and library, the philosophical apparatus, and the orrery constructed by Dr. Rittenhouse, were wantonly destroyed or injured.

The above account of the battle of Princeton, as immediately connected with the part which Nassau-Hall sustained in that affair, has been compiled from Major Wilkinson's Memoirs. As that gentleman was an officer in St. Clair's brigade, which formed the advance guard of the army in its retreat from Trenton, and a spectator of the greater part of the action, his account is probably in the main correct.

It is said, in some of the histories, that "after a few discharges of the cannon brought to bear upon the building, Capt. James Moore, of the militia, a daring officer (late of Princeton) aided by a few men, burst open one of the doors and demanded a surrender; which was instantly complied with. In the building were a number of invalid soldiers; but Washington, having no time to spare, left those unable to travel, on their parole of honor, and hurried off with the rest towards Brunswick."

Cornwallis commenced pursuit, on the morning of the third, immediately on finding his victim had escaped. The following historical extract relates to "the old cannon," which as *it* also made some noise about this time, very well deserves to be exalted, as it now is on the college grounds, and to be had in some remembrance.

"On the near approach of the British army, in pursuit, to Princeton, their advance division was suddenly brought to a stand by the discharge of a large 32 pounder. This piece of ordnance formerly belonged to the British; which Washington was unable to take with him when he left Princeton, on account of its carriage being broken. It had been stationed on a temporary breastwork thrown up by the 40th and 55th Hessians, for the purpose of contesting the approach of the American column on its retreat from Trenton. Vestiges of this breastwork are still to be seen, on the portion occupied by the British lines, in the



vicinity of the Seminary grounds. The piece was loaded by some of the inhabitants of the town and pointed towards the British army. As their advance guard were coming up the rising ground, within 300 or 400 yards, it was discharged, which brought them instantly to a halt. The enemy, supposing that Washington had determined to make a stand under cover of the town, sent out their reconnoitering parties of horsemen, and in the mean time cautiously approached the breastwork with their main body, determined to carry it by storm. By these movements they were delayed nearly an hour; and when arrived at the breastwork and the town, were astonished to find them destitute of defenders."

On the 25th September 1776, about three months previous to the battle of Princeton, his Excellency Gov. Livingston, together with the president and nine others of the board of trustees had met, "it being the day of commencement, and seeing no probability of a quorum to do business regularly, on account of the difficulty of public affairs, agreed to recommend to the board at their next sitting, the following things." Among these things, they recommend the board "to sustain the examination of the candidates for degrees, which was performed by the faculty, without the presence of the committee appointed for that purpose." The examination here referred to is manifestly that held in April, 1775. And it was upon the credit of that examination that the class which would have graduated regularly in '76 had their degrees authenticated by an after vote of the board. "The gentlemen met judged a meeting of the board this fall to be of great importance and therefore ordered the Clerk to issue citations to all the members to meet at Princeton on the 3d Wednesday in November next. N. B. The incursions of the enemy into the state, and the depredation of the armies prevented this meeting and indeed prevented all regular business in the college for two or three years." This note, whether original or inserted by a transcriber, expresses the true state of the case, as will appear in further extracts. The college was entirely disbanded only as long as the enemy remained in the state, afterwards a few students who attended were directed in their studies by the president, but no formal commencement was held until the year '79. A full account of that commencement may be found in the New-Jersey Gazette. The effect of the war in diminishing the classes,

may be ascertained by consulting the Triennial Catalogue. Its effect in diminishing the revenue of the college just at a moment when it was beginning to emerge from one of its most sorrowful periods, will appear in further extracts from the minutes.

May 24th, 1777. The board of trustees met at Coopers-ferry. "It was proposed for consideration whether it be expedient to collect the students of the college and endeavour to proceed with their usual instruction? After deliberation—agreed, that if the enemy remove out of this state, Dr. Witherspoon is desired to call the students together at Princeton and to proceed with their education in the best manner he can, considering the state of public affairs, and if more students can be collected than the Doctor can instruct himself, he is directed to obtain such assistance as may be necessary.

Dr. Witherspoon, Mr. Stockton and Mr. Spencer were appointed a committee to determine what repairs are necessary for the convenience of the students, and to order them to be made. But they were directed to go no further than shall be requisite to save the building."

These resolutions were not acted upon until some time after; probably the gentlemen of the board themselves had not a full conception of the extent of the damage.

When at length the sudden confusion of the times had so far subsided as to allow the guardians of the institution to assemble once more in their usual manner, at the semi-annual meeting of the board held in April 1778, they found their beautiful house, burnt up with fire, and all their pleasant things laid waste. The building a heap of ruins—"their church" so dilapidated as to be entirely open to the weather, every thing that they had collected of an ornamental description destroyed or defaced, and the whole premises a miserable wreck, more fit for satyrs than students. What must have been their feelings as they contemplated this shame and ignominy done to that which they had been so many painful years of alternate hope and despair in bringing at last to a degree of strength and beauty which they fondly anticipated would be permanent. But whatever may have been their feelings, they immediately, in spite of all the calamities of their own condition and of the times, with a confidence and energy that appear to have been the effect of inspiration, address them-



selves to the work of building up once more their house, now doubly diminished in the destruction of their buildings and in the destruction of their resources. They at once resolve "that an attempt be made to revive the college so long interrupted by the war."

The college was formally committed to the care and management of Dr. Witherspoon, who with the assistance of Professor Houston, assumed the entire responsibility and agreed to attend to the instruction of any students who should offer themselves. Soon after this arrangement was made, President Smith upon a very honorable and generous suggestion and compromise on the part of Dr. Witherspoon, was chosen Professor of Moral Philosophy. These three gentlemen then assumed the whole management of the college, and the arrangement continued for the most part during the war.

The funds and resources of the board were not only interrupted and lessened at this time, but were annihilated. The securities which they held were useless. A claim was made upon them by the holder of a prize ticket of one of their lotteries, and they declared that it was impossible for them to pay either principal or interest. The money with which the repairs of buildings was effected had to be advanced by members of the board. Particular gratitude is due on this point to the Rev. Mr. Caldwell, and the three gentlemen of the faculty. At the same meeting of the board they agree "to use their most vigorous endeavours to solicit benefactions in this and the neighboring states." Rev. Dr. Scott of New Brunswick, made great exertions in Pennsylvania to obtain some funds, but notwithstanding the friendly feeling apparent in parts of that state towards the institution, the circumstances of the times were such that his labors were but slightly productive. Repeated attempts were made to sell ground owned by the college, especially a lot in Philadelphia, but no purchaser could be found. A tax was laid on the few students entering college, of a guinea each, the income of which together with room rents to be a fund for repairs. On the credit of this fund, a committee is appointed to proceed to Philadelphia and endeavour to negotiate a loan. They reported afterwards that they had not been able in any manner to effect it, but had advanced *thirty-five pounds* to the committee of repairs.

The first thing done to the building in the

way of repairs was to tighten the roof and glaze the windows, next the rooms in the second story were commenced upon, and continued to be completed only as necessity called for them. By the year 1783 the second and third stories had been so far repaired that parts of them were occupied. The lower and the fourth stories were still in ruins, with the exception of one room in the fourth, which was occupied by one of the literary societies.

The building was not only used as a barrack and hospital by the government troops, as before mentioned, but soldiers either of the state militia or of the continental army continued to be quartered in it until the year '81, at which time the trustees found it necessary to appeal to authorities to have the destructive custom prevented.

It was at this same meeting of the board now under review, April, 1788, the first regular meeting held at Princeton after the breaking out of the war, that application was ordered to be made to the state legislature for the confirmation of the charter. The business was committed to Messrs. Peartree Smith, McWhorter and Caldwell. The present charter, as amended from the ancient one, was therefore written by those gentlemen, probably in chief by Mr. Smith. The act amending and establishing the charter was passed March 13th, 1780. A further amendment, which the legislature would not concede at that time, concerning the lessening of the quorum, was passed November 2d, 1781.

In the fall of 1783, Congress was holding its sittings in the college-hall. They had adjourned to this place from Philadelphia, in consequence of the mutinous threats of a portion of the Pennsylvania line, after the disbanding of the army at the peace. That venerable body attended the annual commencement of the college on the last Wednesday in September; and General Washington who was also in Princeton at that time, sat on the stage during the public speaking. President Green, graduated on that day, and delivered the valedictory oration. At the close of his speech he turned to General Washington, and made to him a most eloquent and effective personal address, congratulating him on the happy issue of the perilous and long contest in which he had been engaged, and thanking him in behalf of his fellow students and the authorities of the college for the important and distinguished services rendered to the country dur-

ing the war brought at length, so much through his instrumentality, to a glorious termination. This incident excited a thrilling interest in the whole assembly; and the presence of Congress and of the commander in chief of the American army rendered this commencement one of the most interesting that has occurred since the origin of the institution.

Before Washington left the town the board passed the following resolutions:—

“The Board being desirous to give some testimony of their high respect for the character of his Excellency General Washington, who has so auspiciously conducted the armies of America;—

“Resolved, that the Revds. Drs. Witherspoon, Rodgers and Jones, be a committee to wait upon his Excellency to request him to sit for his picture to be taken by Mr. Charles Wilson Peale of Philadelphia; and ordered, that his portrait when finished be placed in the hall of the college, in the room of the picture of the late king of Great Britain, which was torn away by a ball from the American artillery in the battle of Princeton.”

On the following day Dr. Witherspoon reported that “his Excellency General Washington had delivered to him fifty guineas which he begged the trustees to accept as a testimony of his respect for the college.

“Resolved, that the board accept it, and that the same committee who were appointed to solicit his Excellency’s picture do at the same time present to him the thanks of the board for this instance of his politeness and generosity.”

The painting procured in accordance with the above resolution is well known to be that which now ornaments the college chapel. It hangs, from necessity of the direction of light, opposite the place which its frame used to occupy when it contained the portrait of the king. A full length painting of Governor Belcher used to be in its present place. The latter painting was entirely destroyed by the British soldiery; an effort to restore it was made by the trustees, who applied to the family of the Governor for a portrait to copy from. The present painting was executed by the artist mentioned in the resolution; it was finished and put up in 1784. It is a great objection to the merit of this piece of art being properly appreciated that it has a locality in which no one would think of finding a fine painting. Were it placed in a proper and ac-

cessible position among others it would undoubtedly be the principal point of attraction in almost any picture gallery that has been collected in this country. This difficulty that the painting has to contend against is a real one; few persons are willing or able to perceive the merit of a production of any kind of Art, except by comparison, or on the credit of a general reputation previously made known.

The painting in question is mainly a portrait of Washington—but it is also, in a subordinate sense to this, an historical composition. The *time* at which the portrait was taken is just after the peace, and we have Washington, the stately, the sublime, the serene Washington—the man that made and was made by the Revolution—just come up from the fearful ordeal of that most difficult and improbable of all the contests that were ever undertaken, standing on the sure platform of his success no more elated by that success than he was depressed by the hopelessness of it; waiting for the world’s opinion and seemingly as indifferent to the reputation of a hero as he was to the charge of being a rebel. Such was the strength of his confidence and so much was he his own governor. The commander in chief of the American Armies and the commander of himself. Let a person stand before this painting and regard the superb and glorious stature of the great personage there depicted, the mere physical *presence* of his body and figure, and then study the countenance, the easy and equable settlement of all the features, the mouth and chin, calm and placid, yet so compact and decisive as at once to indicate the highest energy—with eyes out of which beam an effulgence not easily to be described; those eyes and their shadowing brows are the *haunt* of an expression which it is one of the most difficult things to give words to, but which any one who has been in the habit of studying the effect of a certain union of power and complacency in productions of Art will at once recognize. An extract from an oration on the death of Washington by President Smith—a production that every scholar ought to read who has not read it—is introduced in this place as a commentary on the portrait. “Washington was always equal to himself. There was a dignity in the manner in which he performed the smallest duties. A majesty surrounded him that seemed to humble those who approached him, at the same time that there was a benignity in his manners that in-



vited their confidence and esteem. His emotions, naturally strong and ardent, as they are perhaps in all great men, he had completely subjected to the control of reason, and placed under the guard of such a vigilant prudence, that he never suffered himself to be surprised by them. Philosophy and Religion in his breast had obtained a noble triumph; and his first title to command over others was his perfect command of himself."

Some objection may be made to the fact of the principal figure of the piece being an indifferent member in the composition. But it is to be remembered that this is a *portrait* of Washington, the General and Leader. Perhaps he is the only man of his time that could have been consistently represented as indifferent to the death of an officer at his feet; but it is done consistently in this instance, even on the supposition of the other figures being essential parts of the composition.

When it is remembered that Washington looked upon the success at Princeton as being one of the deciding victories of the Revolution, there is great force in the posture of the figure, the right hand with the sword referring to that battle; indeed considering the *time* of the representation as being at the close of the war, there is a very peculiar force in this incident of the painting; it has a truly artistic energy. There is also an exquisite artifice in the machinery of the flag, made as if by *accident* to encircle his head;—*that* was the flag under which he led his armies.

The death scene of General Mercer is beautiful, truly so. The calm and unruffled coun-

tenance of one whose spirit is just about to leave for a world where battles cease forever, where nothing entereth to molest or make afraid, where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest, with the passing shadow of a very slight tinge of anxious expression, that may be the effect of bodily pain, and perhaps having some reference to his defeat. It is the countenance of the amiable, the magnanimous, the pious Mercer. The execution giving a proper position to the body—and a general relaxation of the system by pain and approaching death, particularly the situation of the left arm and hand under the body, which cannot be seen except upon close examination, are very natural; and the drapery is in accordance. But such things are small recommendations to a piece of Art; the man who put a prisoner to the rack that he might depict pain impressively, was no less an empiric in his Art than a monster in his humanity. The *soul* of Mercer appears in his *countenance*. The figure sustaining his head is impressive, as also the one leaning over him with the flag, from their unobtrusiveness, and the evident *sincerity* with which they contemplate the death of their General. And about the entire composition there is an appearance of reality, far removed from the rant and excessiveness of much Art—that would be meritorious even if it fell into dullness and monotony, which in this instance it is far from doing. The state and preservation of this painting should be attended to. If it cannot be defended from dust and wash where it is, then it should be removed.











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